

Equality analysis of social distancing measures, including restrictions on movement and restrictions on gatherings, in response to severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in England

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Completed by: Cabinet Office
Date: 27 May 2020

Summary

1. This document records the analysis undertaken by Departments to enable Ministers to fulfil the requirements placed on them by the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This is a summary of the analysis as to the impacts of social distancing measures, and subsequent easements, on groups with protected characteristics. Ministers should consider the equality impact outlined in this PSED when making decisions regarding easements under step two. The PSED is made up of three limbs; it requires the Minister to pay due regard to the need to:
 - Limb 1: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
 - Limb 2: advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
 - Limb 3: foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
2. Government will continue to keep these policies and their impact under review to ensure that disadvantages are minimised wherever possible. Measures will only continue for as long as the level of risk is assessed to be sufficient to justify these negative impacts.

Social Distancing measures

3. On 23 March the Government introduced Non-pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs) to curb the spread of the coronavirus, protect the NHS and save lives. These included restrictions on people leaving the house and gathering as well as obligations on businesses and other public facilities to close. Enforcement measures were also introduced, including penalties. Furthermore the government advised schools to close and vulnerable people to take further measures to protect themselves. Previous PSED assessments considered the impact of these measures.
4. On 10 May the Government eased the restrictions on leaving the home, including to allow people to spend time in public open space and use sports courts for exercise. People were also encouraged to return to work and several retail services were permitted to re-open. An equalities assessment was conducted to consider these changes. This assessment now considers the remaining restrictions as a package - rather than separating phase one from the initial lockdown.

5. Further easements to be introduced under phase two of the Government's Roadmap¹ are also considered included in this assessment are:
 - opening pre-school and some primary school year groups.
 - allowing more social interaction with non-household members in limited socially distanced gatherings outside, and 'bubbling' with other households where this includes a single-occupancy household;
 - phased opening of more retail; and
 - elite athletes to return to training and competitive sport behind closed doors.
6. A detailed PSED assessment and annex accompanies this summary which covers the impacts of these measures. This summary presents the impacts on the specific groups for the policy as a whole to date and consideration of the new easements.

Impact of the restrictions currently in place

7. Substantial economic and societal impacts have been identified with respect to **young people** and **children**. A report from the IFS² concluded that school closures are almost certain to increase educational inequalities. Pupils from better-off families are spending longer on home learning; they have access to more individualised resources such as private tutoring or chats with teachers; they have a better home set-up for distance learning; and their parents report feeling more able to support them. Policymakers are working urgently to address the gaps in education that the crisis is widening. There is a connection between ethnicity, disadvantage and attainment, almost 50% of children from ethnic minority backgrounds grow up in low-income households, compared to just over 20% of young white people.³
8. There is strong evidence from past recessions that **young people** will be among the hardest hit economically; those who have recently left education or just entering the job market are more susceptible to long-term employment and pay scarring⁴.
9. There is some evidence of higher levels of loneliness and boredom in **young people**⁵. This may have improved under the May 10 easements, although broadly levels of loneliness (36%) and boredom (51%) remain elevated across the population (ONS).

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy>

² IFS (2020)

³ Kenway, P. and Palmer, G. (2007) 'Poverty among ethnic groups: How and why does it differ?', New Policy Institute

⁴ <https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/publications/class-of-2020/> (change reference to research report).

⁵ Britain Thinks found 42% of 18-24 year olds reporting 'not coping as well as usual' (among 65+ year olds only 20% reported the same) <https://britainthinks.com/pdfs/Covid19-Diaries-Data-Tables-April-2020.pdf>

10. Other evidence points to **older people** and the **shielding cohort** being at an increased risk of mental illness compared to the general population as quarantine measures start to relax⁶.
11. **Disabled** people have consistently been recognised in the government's equality assessment as being disproportionately impacted by the restriction measures. There are lower employment rates among disabled people⁷ in general and they are more likely to work in sectors that are currently closed (e.g. retail)⁸. The Government's access to work scheme should help to mitigate this. Disabled people are also more likely to have health vulnerabilities that could make them less able and willing to return to work
12. In addition, **disabled** people are disproportionately impacted by the closure of indoor sports and leisure facilities which are particularly important for this group's physical and mental health. These impacts may be partially improved by the 11 May easements which allow for unlimited exercise and recreational activities outdoors but we do not have evidence for this yet.
13. The evidence has consistently pointed to disproportionate negative impacts on **women**; IFS analysis of the Labour Force Survey data suggests that one in six (17%) female employees work in closed sectors compared to one in seven (13%) of male employees.⁹ There is evidence to suggest that, of those with children who are working from home, women have been taking on a larger share of childcare and home schooling responsibilities at this time than men, in the UK¹⁰. Lone parent families, who are predominantly female, are also most financially vulnerable to an economic shock.¹¹ The government continues to be concerned about domestic abuse, of whom the victims are predominantly women. As of 27 April 2020, calls to the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, run by Refuge, had spiked significantly during the lockdown – seeing an on average increase of around 50% in calls since lockdown measures began.¹² As part of a UK-wide package of support, £2 million has been made available to immediately bolster domestic abuse helplines and online support. £750 million of funding has also been made available to the voluntary sector to support charities including those working on domestic abuse.
14. Concerns remain that **pregnant women and new mothers** are being impacted economically by business closures. Pregnant women, who are advised to stay home as they are clinically vulnerable may be particularly vulnerable to workplace discrimination at this time, if employers need to reduce staff. The Government has

⁶ [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)30460-8/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)30460-8/fulltext)

⁷ DWP (2020). The employment of disabled people. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/the-employment-of-disabled-people-2019>

⁸ Labour Force Survey Q4 2019 and the Annual Population Survey 2018-19

⁹ <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/14791>

¹⁰ <https://www.inet.econ.cam.ac.uk/working-paper-pdfs/wp2018.pdf>

¹¹ Living costs and food survey, ONS

¹² <https://www.refuge.org.uk/refuge-response-to-home-affairs-select-committee-report-on-domestic-abuse-during-covid-19/>

now taken steps to prevent furloughing impacting on maternity pay and allowance calculations. Women may find it harder to access antenatal and postnatal community health services during the pandemic, though steps have been taken to mitigate these impacts.

15. Negative impacts remain in the **LGBT** community and provisional results from an ongoing survey by the LGBT Foundation¹³ found that as of 23 April, 10% of LGBT respondents reported that they do not feel safe where they are currently staying and 18% were concerned that their situation would lead to substance or alcohol misuse, or that it would trigger a relapse.¹⁴ Evidence concerning the easements and the improved ability to leave the house is not yet available, although it is anticipated that this will have assisted mental wellbeing if LGBT people are able to spend more time away from a difficult home environment relating to their gender identity.
16. The ONS has produced new data showing that people from **BAME** communities are at greater risk of severe adverse outcomes from Covid-19.¹⁵ PHE has announced they will conduct a review analysing how different factors, including ethnicity, impact on Covid19 outcomes.¹⁶
17. A high proportion of **Black, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi groups** are employed in sectors where businesses are required to remain close, and are therefore less likely to benefit from the Government's message to return to work. For example the combined Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic group had a higher percentage of workers in the distribution, hotels and restaurants sector (30.7%) which remain closed. Bangladeshi men are four times as likely as white British men to have jobs in shut-down industries, due in large part to their concentration in the restaurant sector, and Pakistani men are nearly three times as likely, partly due to their concentration in taxi driving. There are also other heightened challenges for returning to work in some ethnic groups, for example 18.9% of Black households were made up of a single parent with dependent children¹⁷, the highest percentage out of all ethnic groups for this type of household.
18. Outdoor access may disproportionately benefit people from **ethnic minority backgrounds** who are more likely to live in urban areas – for example around 2% of White British households experienced overcrowding, compared with 30% of Bangladeshi households (the highest percentage). Black people are the least likely to have access to outdoor space (private or shared garden, balcony etc) and all ethnic minority groups are less likely to have access to a private garden than White people.

¹³ LGBT Foundation <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1CiNrIKHBSpz69-z7ei65SHfpflneoEha>

¹⁴ Please note that these findings are provisional and subject to change once the fieldwork is completed.

¹⁵ Coronavirus (COVID-19) related deaths by ethnic group, England and Wales: 2 March 2020 to 10 April 2020 which can be found here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/articles/coronavirusrelateddeathsbyethnicgroupenglandandwales/2march2020to10april2020>

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/review-into-factors-impacting-health-outcomes-from-covid-19>

¹⁷ [Census data for England and Wales](#)

19. Restrictions on gatherings and the closure of places of worship will have an adverse impact on many **people of faith**, particularly those with religious festivals during the period. These restrictions apply across all faiths. Following the publication of the UK Government's roadmap to rebuild Britain, a series of ministerial-led Task forces have been set up to develop plans for how and when closed sectors can reopen safely. Under Step two of the Roadmap the Government is considering other measures to assist people of faith to practise their religion. This includes allowing larger gatherings of upto 15 people for weddings, allowing private prayer to take place in places of worship as well as graveside rituals, such as Jewish gravestone-setting, which are important for such groups.
20. **Income** is not a protected characteristic, but this assessment has nonetheless considered how the Government's policy has impacted different income groups. Lower-paid and lower-skilled workers have been worst affected by the crisis and are losing their jobs in greater numbers. For instance, low earners were seven times as likely as high earners to have worked in a sector that was shut down¹⁸. Lower-income households are generally less resilient to falls in income, due to spending a higher proportion of their incomes on 'essential goods' (e.g. groceries, household bills)¹⁹. They are also more likely to be in debt or have low cash savings.

Easements under step 2

21. The following measures are planned to be introduced under Step Two of the Government's roadmap to recovery.

Reopening schools for certain year groups

22. The Government's Roadmap set out a plan to reopen certain school years, focusing in particular on early years, reception, class 1 and class 6. This will have immediate benefits for children in these year groups. Evidence is consistent on the benefits of early education to children's learning and development (particularly for disadvantaged children) and primary school pupils may find independent learning through remote methods more challenging than children in secondary education. This is why the Government has targeted these groups. Nonetheless, it is acknowledged that this limited return to school will mean that the benefits of school attendance will be unequally shared across age groups.
23. There are significant economic benefits for parents who are enabled to work, and there is particularly strong evidence of benefits for **women**, who typically perform a higher proportion of childcare and home schooling than men.²⁰ Opening schools will also help limit educational inequalities between **low and high income families** as noted above in paragraph 7; it has been suggested that keeping schools closed until

¹⁸ IFS (2020) Sector shutdowns during the coronavirus crisis: which workers are most exposed?

¹⁹ ONS (2020) Living costs and food survey

²⁰ <https://www.inet.econ.cam.ac.uk/working-paper-pdfs/wp2018.pdf>

September could increase the attainment gap by 25-75%²¹. However, these benefits will depend on the proportion of children able to return.

24. Some **ethnic groups** are over-represented in disadvantaged populations and there is strong evidence to show that disadvantaged children gain the most benefit from early education. There is good evidence to show the particular benefits of early education to children with **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)**. Such pupils already qualify for continued access, although uptake is unclear.
25. The Government will need to allow certain places of worship and community centres, where childcare facilities are hosted, to open for these specific circumstances. This is a necessary step to enable the policy, although it could give rise to concerns from faith groups on equality grounds, given places of worship are not yet open for collective worship. The Government believes the general equality benefits of opening childcare facilities outweighs these concerns and that the continued closure of places of worship for collective worship is justified on health grounds.

Reopening retail and other outdoor services

26. Reopening more retail would have economic benefits for several groups that are disproportionately employed in this sector. This includes **women, young people, low income groups, ethnic minorities** and **disabled people** (as covered in the impact of the current measures above).
27. The initial, more restricted opening of retail - i.e. including car showrooms and outdoor markets - would confer fewer benefits for the groups identified above, but we have not identified data at this stage to inform on the specific employment impacts.
28. It is assumed that all people could benefit from improved retail access, although people of lower incomes are less likely to benefit from car showrooms. Of lower income groups, single-parent families of which women make up a large proportion, young people, and ethnic minority groups, are less likely to benefit. Opening markets is more likely to benefit people from lower socio-economic groups, including some ethnic minority groups, as these groups tend to have a stronger reliance on markets for clothing and household goods, given prices are generally cheaper than bricks and mortar retail.
29. The opening of further outdoor facilities, such as zoos, sculpture parks, model villages, heritage gardens and access to e.g. boat hire, could have wide benefits across society, including on mental well-being. Low income groups may be less likely to benefit from ticketed activities.

Opening sports facilities for elite athletes

30. The package for elite sport athletes will be important for these athletes, and is expected to have a positive impact on their physical and mental well-being but will have limited benefits across the population of groups with protected characteristics.

²¹ Education Endowment Foundation (2020) Policy briefing on school closures

31. Broadcasting professional sport will have a much broader impact across the population. YouGov polling of sports channels indicates that men are more likely to rate sports channels positively (60-63%) than women (37-38%) and that people aged 24-40 years give a more positive rating than the over 55s. The announcement is therefore most likely to be welcomed by these groups.
32. There is some evidence that watching sport can increase levels of domestic abuse. One study found that domestic violence reports to police increase by 38% following football matches in which the English national side lost²². However data is limited and it is difficult to predict the interplay with the social distancing policy. The Government continues to monitor evidence on domestic abuse and is supporting domestic abuse charities and services as set out in paragraph 13.
33. Sports are a small part of available tv and online media and sport has been more exceptional in its absence than in its return. Those not enjoying sport on tv are likely to find other media options readily available.

Increasing social contact - gatherings outside and household bubbling

34. The Government will allow groups of upto 6 individuals or groups of two households (which may occasionally exceed 6 people) to gather outside. This is expected to impact positively on all groups and especially on those people living alone or in most need of support from others.
35. Household bubbling would enable people of one household to interact with another without social distancing. The Government has been considering introducing a minimalist approach under which single occupancy households would be able to bubble with one other household. **People living alone** are more likely to be **older**, are more likely to rent their accommodation and be **less financially secure**²³. They generally report lower levels of happiness and higher levels of anxiety than people living with a partner without children²⁴. The bubbling model could therefore help to improve the well-being of this group, which has been more profoundly isolated under the measures than in normal life. Polling consistently indicates that what people miss the most is seeing friends and family²⁵.
36. Not introducing more social contact at this time risks certain equality concerns, given that people would be able to go to the shops with someone else, but shielded and otherwise vulnerable groups that have been advised not to go outside will not benefit from this external social contact. However, there are clear higher public grounds to this distinction. This is due to the smaller space and higher likelihood of touching surfaces. The Government would therefore have a strong justification for not

²² Lancaster University (2013) <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0022427813494843>

²³ ONS <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/articles/the-cost-of-living-alone/2019-04-04>

²⁴ ONS as above

²⁵ UCL Social Survey (2020) finds 81% miss seeing friends and 77% miss seeing family.

introducing this measure at this stage, given the health impacts, especially for more vulnerable individuals.

Ensuring hotels and accommodation are open to people required to self-isolate on arrive into England

37. A change in the regulations is required to enable hotels and other accommodation to open for this purpose. We have not identified any specific equality impacts for this change, besides the general health benefits of reduced risk of transmission.

Opening up venues and places of worship for small weddings and civil partnerships

38. The government is considering allowing small weddings and civil partnerships to take place with a limited number of people in attendance (around 6). However, this would put pressure on social distancing measures inside venues, and some **faiths** require weddings to take place outside, over several days, or with up to 10 witnesses in attendance. This policy would therefore only enable marriages solemnised under certain faiths, and would discriminate against all other **religions**. Marriages under the special procedure-for those who are seriously ill and not expected to recover, are taking place in some cases, where it is safe to do so. We could therefore only apply the policy where PHE believes the venues and numbers present would be safe.
39. This policy should also be considered in light of further opening of places of worship for communal prayer, and places such as hotels for civil marriages and civil partnerships, under Step 3 of the measures for coming out of lockdown, as well as any easements on restrictions of public gatherings and social contact generally. There is not necessarily a clear argument for advancing the celebration of certain religious or civil ceremonies (marriages) above others (e.g. funerals), ahead of the general opening of places and venues at which these would normally take place. Moreover, there is a clear public desire for greater freedoms to attend funerals of loved ones during this time, and therefore it seems reasonable that relaxations that allow people to host public ceremonies need to be considered alongside the wider policies on social contact and public gatherings.

Conclusions

40. The social distancing policy and the measures within the Coronavirus Restrictions regulations continue to have a profound impact on the population at large, and disproportionately on groups with protected characteristics. Young people, women, low earners, disabled people and ethnic minority groups are most likely to have been impacted economically by the closure of retail and hospitality sectors. Gender disparities persist without widespread options for school and childcare. There is concern about lasting economic impacts and scarring, especially for young people. There is also evidence of a widening attainment gap between rich and poor children, which may have lasting impacts. Mental health and well-being remains a concern, especially for individuals living alone or vulnerable within their household

circumstances - e.g. domestic abuse victims and LGBT young people living with unaccepting families.

41. Measures to improve access to the outdoors and social interaction will have had benefits for many and may have helped young people in particular, and vulnerable individuals to better escape the household environment, although there is limited data available here at this time. The improved access to outdoor space will have had particular benefits for those living in small urban dwellings without access to private outdoor space, which are disproportionately those from ethnic minorities. The new measures to allow people to gather in larger groups outside is expected to further these benefits.
42. Moves to open up retail will have some positive impacts for people with protected characteristics and there is evidence that women, disabled people, ethnic minority groups and young people in particular, work in the retail sector.
43. If introduced, additional easements to improve social interaction would have further benefits for the population. However, as people increasingly leave their homes and return to something resembling normal life, the differences between the population at large and the generally vulnerable and shielded communities (disproportionately older people and those with underlying health conditions, including disabled people) will become more pronounced, which may further impact the mental well-being of these people. The option of allowing limited household bubbling could be an important mitigation to this, helping to improve circumstances for single-occupancy households in particular, who are more likely to be older individuals; however the health impacts of this also need to be considered given the smaller size of peoples homes (compared to public spaces) and the higher likelihood of touching surfaces.
44. Moves to open up retail and opportunities for social interaction may exacerbate the impacts felt by religious groups, as places of worship remain closed. The government's further consideration of private prayer, weddings and other religious rituals are important mitigations in this respect.
45. Overall, this assessment has identified many indirect equality impacts of the policy. Nonetheless the health imperative continues to justify the Government's approach and there is good evidence that the Government is adapting its policy and taking measures to mitigate the impacts on groups with protected characteristics where possible and appropriate.

Full Equality Analysis

Equality analysis of social distancing measures, including restrictions on movement and restrictions on gatherings, in response to severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in England

Completed by: Cabinet Office
Date: 27 May 2020

Introduction

1. This document records the analysis undertaken by the Department to enable Ministers to fulfil the requirements placed on them by the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The PSED is made up of three limbs; it requires the Minister to pay due regard to the need to:
 - Limb 1: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
 - Limb 2: advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
 - Limb 3: foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
2. The protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership (only relevant in a workplace context under the PSED), pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
3. Ministers should consider the equality impacts outlined in this PSED when making future decisions concerning social distancing measures.

Brief outline of policy or service

4. The Government has carried out three PSED assessments on the impacts of the lockdown policy implemented on 23 March. The 10 broad measures introduced included:
 - a. self-isolate for 7 days if experiencing symptoms;
 - b. self-isolate for 14 days if a household member is experiencing symptoms;
 - c. shield the clinically extremely vulnerable
 - d. protect the vulnerable (self-isolation for the 1.5m most vulnerable, including the over 70s, those with specific health conditions, and pregnant women with some underlying health conditions);
 - e. no gatherings of more than two people (not in the same household);
 - f. closure of schools (except for key workers and vulnerable children);
 - g. closing certain retail and indoor public spaces;

- h. closing outdoor public spaces;
 - i. prohibition on mass gatherings; and
 - j. stay at home.
5. On 10 May the Government introduced the first set of easements to social distancing measures, taking effect from 13 May:
- permitting people to go to a public open space for the purposes of open air recreation to promote their physical or mental health or emotional wellbeing (moderating the impact of the 'Stay at home' NPI);
 - allowing people to exercise or enjoy open air recreation on their own, or in household units and in groups of no more than two, with one person being outside their household (but continuing to follow the 2m social distancing guidelines);
 - permitting people to use outdoor sports courts such as tennis courts, basketball courts, golf courses, angling etc;
 - encouraging people to return to work in sectors of the economy that the regulations allow to be open, if they were unable to work from home - new Covid-19 Secure guidelines were issued to support employers to make workplaces safe;
 - allowing people to move house even when it is not reasonably necessary to do so; and
 - reopening garden centres and allowing people to visit waste and recycling centres
 - clarifying that it is permitted for a hotel or accommodation provider to provide services to any 'key worker' who is part of the effort to deal with Covid-19 (or who works in one of the critical sectors listed in the critical worker guidance), as the need relates to their work (this was already provided for in guidance)
 - clarifying that additional reasonable excuses to leave, or be outside of the home include visiting a shop which is otherwise closed, in order to collect goods which have been ordered in advance or visiting a local waste and recycling centre.
6. The amendment regulations also increased the value of fixed penalty notices, especially for repeat offenders, which may be issued to anyone aged 18 or over who an authorised person reasonably believes has committed an offence under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions)(England) Regulations 2020.
7. At the next decision point, on or before 29 May, a view will be taken on whether to proceed to 'Step 2' of the government's roadmap to lift restrictions²⁶. The changes that are being considered for 'Step 2', as examined in this version of the PSED, are:
- a. a phased return for early years settings and reception, year 1 and year 6 of schools;
 - b. opening non-essential retail, when and where it is safe to do so;

²⁶<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy#our-roadmap-to-lift-restrictions-step-by-step>

- c. permitting single occupancy households to extend their contact to another household
 - d. permitting cultural and sporting events to take place behind closed doors; and
 - e. reopening more local public transport in urban areas, subject to strict measures.
 - f. permitting private or individual worship in places of worship
 - g. Extending remembrance rights (including memorial services at cemeteries and graveyards)
 - h. Allowing small weddings to take place in places of worship
8. This assessment sets out the ongoing impacts of social distancing measures, and considers how these might be altered by the lifting of restrictions in 'Step 2'.
 9. The measures outlined in paragraph 4 were in the most part implemented under The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations 2020.
 10. The Regulations require that the Secretary of State must review these restrictions at least once every 21 days, with the first review having taken place on 15 April 2020.
 11. An initial PSED assessment was carried out when the Regulations were first introduced. A more detailed assessment was then produced for the first review point on 15 April 2020, incorporating information on the real impact the regulations were having. This assessment has subsequently been updated for each review point and will continue to be for as long as the regulations stand. This iteration of the assessment reflects the changes implemented on 13 May 2020 and examines the changes that will be considered at the decision point on 28 May 2020.
 12. School closures were not included in the Regulations, but the limitations on schools (measure 5) were set out in guidance. This is similarly the case for self-isolation measures (measures 1 and 2) and shielding the clinically extremely vulnerable (measure 3). The impact of these measures on people of protected characteristics are assessed in the final section of this document.
 13. This document also acknowledges some of the impacts of the listed measures that do not form part of the Regulations under review. It is of particular relevance to note the positive benefits of shielding the vulnerable, set out below, which help to protect the most vulnerable in our society. To an extent the purpose of these measures frames the context for considering this package as a whole, as the ultimate goal of all of these interventions is the protection of life, in particular for people who are vulnerable because of their age, health, pregnancy, or other factors.
 14. To note, the PSED only requires that due regard be given to the impact of policies on people with the protected characteristic of marriage or civil partnership in limited circumstances. These are the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act in the context of employment. We have not identified any impact on people with this protected characteristic, so it has not been addressed in detail in the below analysis.

Closure of businesses

Regulations 4 and 5 provide that businesses and other venues across the UK must close during the emergency period except for the exceptions set out in the regulations. They require the closure of certain retail and public premises, although these businesses may continue to operate in order to respond to online and telephone orders etc. Similarly, hotels and similar accommodation must close except for where people are living in them as interim abodes whilst their primary residence is unavailable to them, including critical workers, permanent residents and non-UK residents, those unable to move into a new home, for homeless and vulnerable people, and to host blood donations. Hotels and similar accommodation can also provide services to critical workers as part of the effort to deal with coronavirus, if the stay is necessary for their work. The regulations also provide for places of worship to close except for funerals (provided social distancing is observed) and for support of the vulnerable. There are also restrictions on crematoriums.

The easements introduced on 10 May, and enacted in legislation on 13 May included new measures, including garden centres and plant nurseries to open and allowing people to visit household waste and recycling centres and to pick up items ordered online. The government also encouraged people to return to work if they are not able to work from home.

The Government set out in its Roadmap strategy that under step two, it would look at reopening non-essential retail, outdoor and indoor markets (except those already explicitly allowed by the regulations), and auction houses.

This section considers the equalities impact of reopening the retail sector, while recognising that the decision on which aspects of retail to open will be heavily influenced by the public health implications.

Age

15. We have identified impacts under limb 1 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 2 and 3.
16. There may be differential impacts on different age groups from the closure of businesses. We recognise the particular benefit visiting business premises and other public places offer the over 70s. These include reducing social isolation e.g. cafés and libraries and could also include offering care and support services e.g. from community centres, indoor sports and leisure facilities. Reducing access to these premises by enforced closures could have a negative impact. We recognise there may be increased risk to physical and mental health to these groups as a result. The Regulations provide some in-built mitigation to this, such as setting out in Regulation 6(2) that a “reasonable excuse” to leave home would include accessing the support services listed there. Further mitigations have been put in place to address these

including a nationwide and localised efforts to mobilise volunteers to support these groups.

17. Limited access to IT resources, or lack of confidence in using them, may limit the ability of older groups to offset the effect of business closures through taking advantage of online business services such as online shopping.
18. The easements enacted in legislation on 13 May permit a range of public and private outdoor sports courts to re-open. This is expected to have a positive impact on all age groups' physical and mental health and of young people and children in particular. The opening of golf courses is expected to have a larger positive impact on adult men as 84 percent of registered golf players are adult male²⁷. However, we recognise that there could be a disproportionate negative impact from businesses that remain closed on younger people and children, including indoor sports facilities and leisure centres; soft play centres, arcades, bowling alleys; ice rinks; funfairs; youth centres; and libraries. The services these offer are disproportionately used by younger people and their parents. These sites offer mental and physical health benefits that we can reasonably expect to be reduced during the duration of business and premises closures. Mitigations, as well as the opening of outdoor sports facilities, include encouraging online provision of services, although we recognise not all of the benefits of these services can be replicated virtually.
19. The easements announced on 10 May also encouraged individuals to return to work if it is safe to, and if they are unable to work from home, and if their workplaces have not been told to shut by the regulations. This may have had a positive impact on young people as 1.1m workers under 25 work in sectors impacted by the restrictions – making them twice as likely to be working in an impacted sector compared to older workers aged 45-64²⁸. In a survey by Britain Thinks, respondents aged 18-24 were the age group most likely to report being furloughed, on reduced hours or taking obligatory temporary leave (35%)²⁹. It is therefore likely that a return to work may currently only benefit younger workers if their workplace is exempt from closure. Younger people are less likely to be able to work from home when compared to older people³⁰ where workplaces are required to close. However, this does not necessarily translate into the actual impact of the crisis, for which there is limited real-time data.
20. The opening of non-essential retail as part of Step Two of the Government's plan to ease restrictions, is expected to benefit younger people considerably: 24.6% of workers in non-food retail are aged 18-24³¹ (the highest proportion by age category),

²⁷ [Statistica business survey 2019](#)

²⁸ Living costs and food survey, ONS

²⁹ Table 54 <https://britainthinks.com/pdfs/Covid19-Diaries-Data-Tables-April-2020.pdf>

³⁰ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/coronavirusandhomeworkingintheuklabourmarket/2019>

³¹ From the 2019 January-December APS, collated by the Labour Markets Team in BEIS

and sales assistants & cashiers was one of the top job categories in which 22-29 year olds worked as of 2017, as reported by the ONS³².

21. A return to work may also increase the risk of exposure, although government guidance to support a return to work seeks to mitigate this by advising employers to:
 - encourage social distancing in the workplace if people cannot work from home;
 - increase the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning;
 - keep the activity time involved as short as possible if people need to work in close proximity;
 - use screens or barriers to separate people from each other;
 - use back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible; and
 - reduce the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering' (so each person works with only a few others).
22. While in the population as a whole, young people are more likely to be affected by the shutdown, the reverse is true among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. While 24% of young white British and 29% of young Bangladeshis work in shut-down sectors, the figure is 14% for 30- to 44-year-old white British but 40% for 30- to 44-year-old Bangladeshis.³³
23. The impact of not being able to work and job loss due to business closure in terms of long-term labour market outcomes is likely to vary by age. There is strong evidence from past recessions that young people who have recently left education and have recently entered or are about to enter the labour market, at greater risk to long-term unemployment and pay scarring than the average worker³⁴. Older workers are also likely to take longer than middle aged workers to get back to work once they become unemployed³⁵.
24. Older people are more likely to fall into the 'extremely clinically vulnerable' group. Government strongly advises this group to shield themselves; any shielders whose jobs are not practicable from home would not be able to work if they follow government advice. There is a risk that people in this category may experience difficulties if their workplace re-opens, but they wish to follow government advice and shield themselves. Employees who have been advised to shield are therefore eligible to receive Statutory Sick Pay and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme can be used to support those advised to shield in professions where they are unable to work from home.

³²<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/youngpeoplescareeraspirationsversusreality/2018-09-27>

³³<https://www.ifs.org.uk/inequality/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Are-some-ethnic-groups-more-vulnerable-to-COVID-19-than-others-V2-IFS-Briefing-Note.pdf>

³⁴ <https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/publications/class-of-2020/>

³⁵<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peoplenotinwork/unemployment/datasets/unemploymentbyageanddurationseasonallyadjustedunem01sa>

25. There is limited evidence available to assess the impact of recent changes to facilitate click and collect services, re-open garden centres, re-open household waste and recycling centres, clarify the position on using hotels for critical workers, and allowing non-essential house moves. We might broadly expect that older people and low earners that have more limited access to technologies will not benefit as much as the broader population from click and collect. If these services are not accessible, disabled people might also not benefit from them.
26. The benefit of re-opening garden centres for the elderly, is expected to be limited as many are asked to continue shielding. Urban dwellers, who are more likely to be young people from ethnic minorities and other households that do not have access to a garden, will benefit less from access to garden centres. Young people from ethnic minorities and other households that do not have access to a garden, will benefit less from access to garden centres.
27. Similarly, the elderly are less likely to benefit from being able to visit household waste and recycling centres or easements of home moves, as they continue to shield. Younger people, who may be less able to manage the financial interruption of delayed home moves, may benefit from these easements.

Disability

28. We have identified impacts under limb 1 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 2 and 3.
29. Based on the data available, we believe the fatality rate of COVID-19 is higher in those with pre-existing medical conditions which, where they are long-lasting and have substantial effects on activity, will meet the Equality Act 2010 definition of disability.
30. There may be increased risk to physical and mental health to people with disabilities as a result of business closures, from increased social isolation and reduced care and support e.g. from community centre, sports and leisure facilities closures.
31. Since our original analysis, the specific health and well-being impacts of the closure of sports facilities on those with mental health conditions and/or particular disabilities such as autism have been further considered. We recognise that there is a particular negative impact on these groups from the closure of sports facilities including fitness studios, gyms, swimming pools or other indoor leisure centres and other leisure facilities for support to improve mental and physical health. While the opening of several outdoor sports facilities may have a positive impact on the physical and mental well-being of individuals with disabilities, indoor facilities that remain closed and provide those individuals with access to specialised equipment and support, is expected to have a continued negative impact. The provisions in Regulations and associated guidance concerning taking exercise and leaving the house for medical assistance and/or to avoid injury and illness go some way to mitigating this impact. The Government is also publicising free ways to improve mental and physical health,

through using on-line resources; although the benefits of these will not help groups who are not digitally literate or do not have easy access to the internet.

32. We recognise that some people who have a disability or health condition who require adjustments could be at a disadvantage compared to those who do not have a disability and are required to work from home as a result of business closures due to COVID 19. Employers are legally obliged to make reasonable adjustments to make sure workers with disabilities aren't substantially disadvantaged when doing their jobs. Alternative/additional reasonable adjustments agreed for the standard workplace may need to be made to make homeworking possible for disabled people, or in order for workplaces to be made suitable for disabled people as well as comply with social distancing measures. The Access to Work scheme can assist in the process and with associated costs for employers and has additionally taken steps to put in place easements to enable disabled people to work more flexibly during the pandemic (see Annex 1 for detailed information).
33. In addition, some disabled people might be more concerned about working even where public health guidance allows them to; and some employers might assume that they should not work.
34. A comparison of data from the Labour Force Survey Q4 2019 and the Annual Population Survey 2018-19, suggests that disabled people may be overrepresented in the 'Administrative and Support Services Activities'. The Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey (BICS)³⁶ published by ONS³⁷ suggests that this industry has one of the highest proportions of reported furloughing among businesses that are continuing to trade (34%). As disabled people may be disproportionately impacted by this furloughing, encouraging these businesses to return to work could potentially have a positive impact on this group.
35. Similarly the re-opening of non-essential retail may particularly impact disabled people, who make up 16.8% of workers in non-food retail (using the Equality Act 2010's definition of disability)³⁸. This may have economic benefits for some people, but could also increase their risk of exposure, although the mitigations set out in paragraph 21 will help to mitigate this risk.
36. Disabled people are more likely to fall into the "extremely vulnerable" group being asked to shield. Disabled people have lower employment rates than non-disabled people³⁹ and lower household incomes.⁴⁰ Therefore, labour market disruption associated with "shielding" may have a larger impact on the financial or socio-

³⁶ [Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey \(BICS\)](#) 07 May 2020 update

³⁷ BICS is a qualitative fortnightly survey by ONS covering business turnover, workforce, prices and trade. They are not official statistics, but have been developed to deliver timely indicators to help understand the impact of COVID-19

³⁸ January-December 2019 APS, collated by the Labour Markets Team in BEIS

³⁹ DWP (2020). The employment of disabled people. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/the-employment-of-disabled-people-2019>

⁴⁰ DWP (2020). Households below average incomes 2018/19.

economic position of disabled people. Among those in work, some people with a disability will be less able to work from home and may be more economically vulnerable - for example there is evidence of higher use of foodbanks among people with a disability⁴¹. In response, changes have been made to the welfare state to better support disabled people, including access to SSP/eligibility. Therefore, for those people who are considered to be 'clinically extremely vulnerable' – including those with disabilities – a return to work would not be advised, even if workplaces, including non-essential retail as part of Step Two of the government's plan to ease restrictions, were to reopen.

37. There is crossover between the clinically extremely vulnerable group identified in government guidance and disabled people⁴². See specific section on shielding for more information.

Gender reassignment

38. We have identified impacts under limb 1 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 2 and 3.
39. It should be noted however that data on gender reassignment, or more broadly, gender identity or trans status is not collected in major employment or labour market surveys. This limits our assessment of the impact of measures on transgender people in the workplace and from the closure of businesses.
40. The Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey (BICS) published by ONS found that across all industries, the highest proportion of short term staff lay-offs to cope with the impact of COVID-19 on their workforce, were reported by the 'Arts, entertainment, and recreation' industry and the 'Administrative and Support Service Activities' industry (39% reported this in each industry).^{43 44} A comparison of data from the Labour Force Survey and the National LGBT Survey 2017 suggests that LGBT people are overrepresented in these particular industries, which could suggest that LGBT people are disproportionately impacted by these short term lay-offs.
41. There is also some evidence to suggest that transgender people experience discrimination in the labour market, particularly at the interview stage⁴⁵. This may mean this group is disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 associated labour market disruption.

⁴¹ The [Trussel trust](#) (2017) reported high numbers of disabled food bank users. The government has since adapted welfare policies to address this, though disabled people may continue to access food banks in higher numbers than non-disabled adults.

⁴² People with specific cancers are identified as clinically extremely vulnerable; people with cancer are defined as disabled as per the Equality Act 2010.

⁴³ ONS (2020) Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey, 9th April 2020

⁴⁴ BICS is a qualitative fortnightly survey by ONS covering business turnover, workforce, prices and trade. They are not official statistics, but have been developed to deliver timely indicators to help understand the impact of COVID-19

⁴⁵ Totaljobs (2016) Totaljobs trans employee survey report 2016

42. Reopening businesses may potentially offer some benefits to this group.

Pregnancy and maternity

43. We have identified impacts under limb 1 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 2 and 3.
44. We recognise the benefits that visiting particular businesses and premises may offer to pregnant women and new mothers, and the risks to physical and mental health that may arise from reduced access to care and support e.g. from any antenatal or other support groups. Mitigations are in place including encouraging these centres to offer support without social contact e.g. online.
45. A study in Canada found evidence of elevated depression and anxiety among pregnant individuals during the pandemic.⁴⁶ Pregnant women may also be concerned that maternity leave or returning from maternity leave could lead to higher risk of employment disruption associated with business closures. There is also a risk of increased pregnancy discrimination if businesses have to make difficult decisions about which staff to keep on; the Equality Advisory and Support Service has received a significant number of calls regarding workplace pregnancy and maternity discrimination since lockdown started⁴⁷. Mitigations include clear guidance on expectations of employers, and the continuation of discrimination and redundancy protections.
46. Pregnant women and new mothers may suffer economically from business closures. Although the Government has now taken steps to prevent furloughing impacting on maternity pay and allowance calculations, some women will have started maternity leave before 25 April 2020 when these adjustments were made and so may be disadvantaged. We have amended Regulations to ensure entitlement to Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) and Maternity Allowance (MA) will be calculated based on full earnings rather than furlough pay, ensuring that individuals get what they would have received if they had not been furloughed. This will apply for those whose pay period for SMP/MA started on or after 25 April 2020.
47. Pregnant women are classified as 'clinically vulnerable'⁴⁸, and advised to stay at home. There is a risk that people in this category experience difficulties if their workplace re-opens but they wish to follow government advice and shield themselves. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme can be used to furlough employees who have been told to remain home but are unable to work from home. Pregnant women may be particularly vulnerable to workplace discrimination at this time, if employers need to reduce staff. Legal protections continue to exist for all protected characteristics, but are reliant on an individual choosing to take a case to an Employment Tribunal, which can be a stressful and costly process.

⁴⁶ Label et al (2020), <https://psyarxiv.com/gdhkt/>

⁴⁷ EASS internal records

⁴⁸ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/whos-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/>

Race

48. We have identified impacts under limbs 1 and 2 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limb 3. The section below considers the impact of the closure of businesses on employees of businesses that have closed, and the impact on consumers. We know that people from ethnic minority backgrounds are more likely to have persistently low incomes, therefore we've also considered the impact on low income groups.
49. With regards to the impact on business owners, there may be impacts from some business closures that disproportionately affect people from different ethnic groups. However, we do not yet have reliable evidence on the representation of certain ethnic groups by business, in terms of ownership. We are considering appropriate steps to take on this ahead of the next review.
50. COVID-19 will likely disproportionately affect the self-employed, as they may struggle to meet their required outgoings, however the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme is now live, providing financial support for the self-employed up to £2,500 a month. We know that 20.4% of workers in the combined Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic group were self-employed, the highest percentage out of all ethnic groups. The Government has introduced small business grants, business rates relief and business loans, support for the self-employed and business interruption loans to support businesses during this time to mitigate the impact of these closures.
51. The easements enacted as legislation on 13 May permit some individuals to return to workplaces if they cannot work from home and if the business is not required to close, is expected to have a positive impact. However, a high proportion of Black, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi groups are employed in sectors where businesses are still required to close, and are therefore likely to continue to be negatively impacted. For example, the combined Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic group had a higher percentage of workers in the distribution, hotels and restaurants sector (30.7%) which remain closed. Re-opening of non-essential retail as part of Step Two of the government's plan to ease restrictions, is therefore expected to have a limited positive impact on ethnic minority groups as this will not include the hospitality sectors.
52. Men from minority groups are more likely to be affected by the shutdown. While in the population as a whole women are more likely to work in shut-down sectors, this is only the case for the white ethnic groups. Bangladeshi men are four times as likely as white British men to have jobs in shut-down industries, due in large part to their concentration in the restaurant sector, and Pakistani men are nearly three times as likely, partly due to their concentration in taxi driving. Black African and black Caribbean men are both 50% more likely than white British men to be in shut-down sectors.⁴⁹

⁴⁹<https://www.ifs.org.uk/inequality/chapter/are-some-ethnic-groups-more-vulnerable-to-covid-19-than-others/>

53. Although the furlough period being offered by the Government has been extended to October, the hardship for significantly impacted industries may go on beyond this. This may impact their ability to financially sustain interruptions to income and livelihoods and lead to a reduced equality of opportunity, for example, less opportunity to develop new skills. People from Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean and Black African backgrounds have the most limited savings to provide a financial buffer if laid off. Only around 30% live in households with enough to cover one month of income. In contrast, nearly 60% of the rest of the population have enough savings to cover one month's income.⁵⁰
54. While some people are now encouraged to return to their workplaces, some individuals may find it difficult to work from home where their workplaces are required to remain closed. People from ethnic minority groups tend to work in occupations that make it harder to work from home, so may be less able to take up future new working methods. Those of Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnicities were the least likely to work from home⁵¹. For those who are in low income groups, the ability to work from home may be more difficult due to more limited access to IT resources, less space in the home and more caring responsibilities for children or the vulnerable within the home and this could lead to reduced income or loss of work. For example, we know that 18.9% of Black households were made up of a single parent with dependent children⁵², the highest percentage out of all ethnic groups for this type of household.
55. A return to work may therefore benefit people from ethnic minority backgrounds who are currently unable to work from home, although the hotels and restaurants sector is likely to remain closed in Step Two of the government's plan.
56. Conversely a positive economic impact is expected for lower income groups that work in those businesses that remain open, such as supermarkets.
57. While several outdoor sports facilities can open as per the easements enacted in legislation on 13 May, the closure of indoor sports and leisure facilities may impact the mental and physical health of the majority of ethnic minority groups who live in urban areas with fewer open spaces. The Government is publicising free ways to improve mental and physical health through using online resources.
58. Data on use of house waste and recycling centres by different groups is not available. However, we expect lower income groups to benefit from being able to leave home to visit such centres. Data shows that ethnic minority groups are more likely to live in non-decent homes that lack modern facilities⁵³ and homes that have

⁵⁰<https://www.ifs.org.uk/inequality/chapter/are-some-ethnic-groups-more-vulnerable-to-covid-19-than-others/>

⁵¹<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/coronavirusandhomeworkingintheuklabourmarket/2019>

⁵² [Census data for England and Wales](#)

⁵³ [English Housing Survey](#)

less space per person⁵⁴, thereby making the ability to manage and dispose of waste more important.

59. Due to the speed with which Regulations and associated guidance were brought in, some official sources of information remain in English only which may affect groups who do not have English as a first language, which is likely to be associated with race. Where these are reported, we are seeking to provide alternative information in other languages.
60. Other factors associated with race include immigration status. The vast majority of temporary migrants, including those on work and study route, and those on the family/Article 8 leave to remain, will have no recourse to public funds (NRPF). However, the Government's package of measures for supporting employment, statutory sick pay and the eviction protections are not considered public funds and so can be accessed by those with NRPF. In addition, migrants on the 10-year family/private life route can apply to have the NRPF condition lifted if they would otherwise be destitute. The Government has recently digitised the application form, which ensures it can be completed by those who need to remain at home and applications are being dealt with compassionately.
61. The easements enacted in legislation on 13 May ensure people can move home and complete key activities around this, such as viewing property. This will therefore assist more people to move accommodation during this time. There are potential benefits to individuals or families currently living in 'non-decent' homes who are keen to move, of which BAME groups are more likely according to data from the English Housing Survey⁵⁵. However, we have not yet identified strong data to support this.

Religion and belief

62. We have identified impacts under limb 1 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 2 and 3.
63. Changes to shift patterns as a result of adaptations to the current context could have an impact on individuals' ability to express their religious beliefs, although it should be possible for employers to mitigate this when developing rotas.
64. The closure of places of worship (POW) is a highly sensitive issue. It is clear that there is an adverse impact on people of faith if their place of worship is closed (an impact on all those who follow a faith that practices communal prayer).
65. Places of worship which are forced to remain closed during religious festivals, when donations are at their highest, risk a heavy financial impact. Faith organisations report a general reliance on donations from their congregations to sustain their places of worship and/or income generation from their venue, with the places of worship being closed, this too has meant a loss in income (issue raised frequently

⁵⁴ [Centre for Cities](#)

⁵⁵ [English Housing Survey](#)

through stakeholder engagement). As not all POW have charity status, some POWs may not be able to receive the financial support for charities on offer by DCMS. Registered POWs may also still be unsuccessful if they apply to this fund in which eligibility is only for organisations currently delivering essential COVID-19 response services.

66. Other schemes open to POW include the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme and the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Scheme, which are both available to registered charities. Registered charities have also been exempted from the requirement that the applicant derives at least 50% of its income from its trading activity. Finally, HMRC has put in place extra support to agree payment plans with organisations unable to pay relevant HMRC bills, and VAT registered charities can use the VAT deferral scheme. We continue to engage with Faith stakeholders and Faith Leaders to explore how best to reopen POW safely, this includes establishing The Places of Worship Taskforce, working with faith leaders to plan for the safe and gradual re-opening of places of worship. For further detail on wider stakeholder engagement, see Para 140.
67. There are further concerns regarding those with dietary restrictions as a result of their faith, who may face increased difficulty obtaining food that adheres to religious dietary restrictions, due to business closures. At a recent COVID-19 Faith roundtable, a religious organisation provided anecdotal evidence that some specialist food had increased in price - whether this is due to scarcity, and/or cost for the business to obtain, or businesses capitalising on the pandemic, it is not known. Since the Government has encouraged people to return to work if they are able to do so safely, this risk could be relieved once more shops begin to reopen as part of Step Two and Step Three of the government's plan to ease restrictions.

Sex

68. We have identified impacts under limb 1 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 2 and 3.
69. ONS data on death rates in England and Wales suggests that men represent 56.6% of deaths involving COVID-19 up to 8 May 2020⁵⁶. It is unclear whether this has any correlation with occupation or other risks related with sectors that remain open. However, women may have a heightened risk of exposure to Covid 19 as they are over-represented in key worker roles such as in healthcare; for example, as of September 2019 women represented approximately 58% of key workers⁵⁷. General guidance for workplaces has been put in place by the Government to mitigate health risk, and efforts are being made to source PPE materials for health sector roles. However, in the health sector, a BMA council member has stated that 7 out of 10

⁵⁶ ONS Coronavirus (COVID-19) roundup 5 May 2020

⁵⁷ ONS Coronavirus and key workers in the UK, 15 May 2020

women don't have appropriately fitting PPE⁵⁸ and are therefore at increased risk in frontline roles.

70. In addition, some studies report women having higher levels of anxiety relating to Coronavirus than men, with women on the frontline reporting some of the greatest levels of anxiety. 56% of women who say their work is essential report anxiety levels of 7 or more, compared with 30% of men in that group.⁵⁹
71. There could be particular impacts from some business closures disproportionately affecting people based on their sex, for example, women tend to dominate employment within beauty and leisure industries occupations, so may be disproportionately affected by, for example, hair salon closures. The Government has support in place via the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, which prevents employees from being made redundant in affected sectors.
72. Overall, the impacts on employment are mixed. There is some indication of marginally higher rates of being furloughed or working fewer hours for men than for women (24% of men reporting vs 21% of women reporting)⁶⁰, however the IFS analysis of the Labour Force Survey data suggests that one in six (17%) of female employees work in closed sectors compared to one in seven (13%) of male employees.⁶¹
73. Women are disproportionately represented in lower income occupations such as caring, leisure and other services (80%) , sales and customer service (63%) and administrative and secretarial roles (76%), while men comprise more elementary and trades related occupations (74% male) and dominate process, plant and machine operatives (87% male).⁶² Despite this, women are less represented in higher paid positions than men such as manager, director and senior official roles, professional occupations and associate professional and technical occupations.⁶³ Other analysis indicates women have been 5 percentage points more likely to lose their jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic (compared to men) and suggests this could be explained by women taking on more caring responsibilities.⁶⁴
74. Further impacts relating to children and to those from lower income groups may also impact women who constitute 86% of single-parent families⁶⁵, carry out an average of 60% more unpaid work in the home than men,⁶⁶ and form a higher proportion of

⁵⁸ BMA <https://canvas.vuelio.co.uk/britishmedicalassociation/bma-in-the-news-thursday-23rd-april-2020/view/covid-19-dr-helen-fidler-on-bbc-radio-4/item>

⁵⁹ <https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/news/parents-struggling-and-women-keyworkers-are-anxious>

⁶⁰ Table 54 <https://britainthinks.com/pdfs/Covid19-Diaries-Data-Tables-April-2020.pdf>

⁶¹ IFS (2020) Sector shutdowns during the coronavirus: which workers are most exposed?

⁶² ASHE ONS 2019

⁶³ <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06838/SN06838.pdf>

⁶⁴ <https://www.inet.econ.cam.ac.uk/working-paper-pdfs/wp2018.pdf>

⁶⁵ ONS Families and households in the UK: 2019

⁶⁶ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/article/s/womenshouldtheresponsibilityofunpaidwork/2016-11-10>

lower income groups relative to men.⁶⁷ Women are more likely to be on insecure or zero-hours contracts, more likely to be dependent on social security and more likely to be in an insecure housing situation than men⁶⁸, exacerbating the impact of any loss of wages. Women make up 70% of those on jobs not eligible for statutory sick pay. As stated previously, HM Treasury has introduced a number of mitigating measures which seek to reduce economic impacts.

75. Business closures may disproportionately impact victims of domestic abuse, who are predominantly women, through having less recourse to go out to visit businesses or leisure premises and therefore having to remain at home with their abuser. As of 27 April 2020, calls to the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, run by Refuge, had spiked significantly during the lockdown – seeing an on average increase of around 50% in calls since lockdown measures began.⁶⁹ A concern has been raised via MPs that the exemption for off-licences to remain open is exacerbating the impact on this group. Mitigations have been in place including government funding to domestic abuse charities. Additionally, enabling workplaces to reopen safely may mitigate the increase in domestic violence as more people are able to return to work.
76. The changes announced on 10 May, encouraging people to return to work in sectors of the economy that the regulations allow to be open, is likely to have seen more men return to work than women. The ONS Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey (BICS)⁷⁰ suggested that the transport, manufacturing and construction industries had scope to increase the number of staff working, and these industries are more than 75% male.⁷¹ This is likely to have positively impacted this group economically, but may also have risked exposing men to increased health risks and, as set out above, men are more susceptible to COVID-19⁷². The government has issued guidance to support a safe return to work, and officials are working with Trade Unions and employers' groups to ensure the necessary safety precautions are put in place to protect employees from a risk of increased exposure to COVID-19.
77. If there is a re-opening on non-essential retail, this is likely to impact women - who make up 58.7% of workers in non-food retail⁷³ - more than men. This will have a positive economic impact, but potentially increase exposure and therefore health risks. However, women may be less able to benefit from businesses reopening unless this is coupled with the reopening of pre-schools, primary schools and

⁶⁷ Resolution Foundation (2019) [Low Pay Britain](#), May 2019

⁶⁸ <https://wbg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/FINAL-Covid-19-briefing.pdf>

⁶⁹ <https://www.refuge.org.uk/refuge-response-to-home-affairs-select-committee-report-on-domestic-abuse-during-covid-19/>

⁷⁰ Estimates from the BICS are currently unweighted, and the ONS advise that they should be treated with caution when used to evaluate the impact of COVID-19 across the UK economy

⁷¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/datasets/employmentbyindustryemp13>

⁷² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/articles/coronaviruscovid19roundup/2020-03-26>

⁷³ January-December 2019 APS, collated by the Labour Markets Team in BEIS

childcare: evidence suggests that, of parents working from home, women have been taking on a larger share of childcare and home schooling responsibilities at this time than men, in the UK⁷⁴. Single parents, 86% of whom are women⁷⁵, are likely to be particularly disadvantaged if schools and childcare options are not available.

78. The government has amended its guidance to clarify that paid childcare, for example nannies and childminders, can take place subject to being able to meet the public health principles set out. There are far more women than men in the childcare sector (96% of group-based provider staff are women).⁷⁶ Access to this form of childcare may therefore help other women to return to work, although this is likely to only benefit families with higher incomes.
79. Household bubbling is also being considered for families with another, single occupant household. If introduced, this may give some families, including single parent families, the option to seek informal childcare from family members - e.g. a lone grandparent.
80. Limiting activity related to house moves has in essence frozen the residential housing market, much construction and the private rented sector. This change will help to restart the housing market and unlock the economic value of construction and related sectors, as well as ensure those who would like to move for financial, safety or other reasons are able to. Officials are not expecting there to be a significant increase in house moves immediately, and believe that the potential for increased transmission can be ameliorated by stringent guidance with input from Public Health England.

Sexual orientation

81. We have identified impacts under limb 1 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 2 and 3.
82. It should be noted that as sexual orientation monitoring is not generally collected by major employment surveys, that there may be issues that LGBT groups are adversely affected by that we are currently unable to capture.
83. The Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey (BICS)⁷⁷ published by ONS⁷⁸ found that across all industries, the highest proportion of short-term staff lay-offs to cope with the impact of COVID-19 on their workforce, were reported by the 'Arts,

⁷⁴ <https://www.inet.econ.cam.ac.uk/working-paper-pdfs/wp2018.pdf>

⁷⁵ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/bulletins/familiesandhouseholds/2019#links-to-related-statistics>

⁷⁶ Childcare and early years providers survey: 2019:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/childcare-and-early-years-providers-survey-2019>

⁷⁷ ONS (2020) Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey, 9th April 2020

⁷⁸ BICS is a qualitative fortnightly survey by ONS covering business turnover, workforce, prices and trade. They are not official statistics, but have been developed to deliver timely indicators to help understand the impact of COVID-19

entertainment, and recreation' industry and the 'Administrative and support service activities' industry (39% reported this in each industry)⁷⁹. A comparison of data from the Labour Force Survey and the National LGBT Survey 2017 suggests that LGBT people are overrepresented in these particular industries, which could suggest that LGBT people are disproportionately impacted by these short term lay-offs.

84. There is evidence that LGB people's general and mental health is worse than that of heterosexual people⁸⁰. The opening of several outdoor sports facilities may go some way to mitigate this for LGB groups' mental health due to the increased ability to leave their homes to exercise multiple times a day, including with one person from another household.
85. A comparison of data from the Labour Force Survey and the National LGBT Survey 2017 suggests that LGBT people are overrepresented in the 'Administrative and Support Services Activities'⁸¹. The Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey (BICS)⁸² published by ONS suggests that this industry has one of the highest proportions of average reported furloughing of businesses that are continuing to trade (34%). As LGBT people may be disproportionately impacted by this furloughing, encouraging these businesses to return to work could potentially have a positive impact on this group.
86. Overall, the current impact is that LGBT people could be affected by business closures, due to being over-represented in the 'Administrative and Support Services Activities', & 'Arts, entertainment, and recreation' industries. As the 'Arts, entertainment, and recreation' industry may be slow to reopen, the LGBT population in employment may face a slower return to work or find employment in less affected sectors.

Socio-economic status

87. While the regulations previously allowed home moves where reasonably necessary, the easements enacted in legislation on 13 May now go further and ensure people can move home and complete key activities around this, such as viewing property. This will therefore assist more people to move accommodation during this time.
88. These particular measures could have an impact across the spectrum of home occupiers - applying to home buyers, private renters and those in social housing. Data points to a barrier to entry for home purchases (e.g. households whose income is in the bottom 10% could expect to spend more than 70% of disposable household income on mortgage repayments for an average property in England⁸³). Private renting is also expensive for low-earners, e.g. people with income in the lowest 25%

⁷⁹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721620/Annex-7-Workplace.ods

⁸⁰ https://www.niesr.ac.uk/sites/default/files/publications/160719_REPORT_LGBT_evidence_review_NIESR_FINALPDF.pdf

⁸¹ Government Equalities Office (2018) National LGBT Survey: Research Report

⁸² ONS (2020) Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey, 7 May 2020

⁸³ ONS

could expect to pay more than 30% of their income on the cost of renting an average property. This makes it difficult for people with low incomes to move house.

89. While we are not expecting there to be a significant increase in house moves immediately, low income groups may benefit from this easement, and ethnic minorities from low income groups in particular. We expect this to be supplemented by the ability to visit house waste and recycling centres which may enable low income groups to maintain their homes that are more likely to be 'non decent' and offer less space per person.
90. Lower income groups may benefit from returning to workplaces if they cannot work from home. We expect this to be the case where there is a limited access to IT resources or less space per person in the home. However, this benefit may be offset by the inability to return to work if a workplace is required to remain closed and it is not possible to work from home. Individuals from lower income groups who work in the hotel and restaurant sector for instance, are likely to be disproportionately affected by this.
91. We know that lower-paid and lower-skilled workers have been worst affected by the crisis and are losing their jobs in greater numbers. For instance, low earners were seven times as likely as high earners to have worked in a sector that was shut down⁸⁴. One mitigating factor is that many of the affected lower earners live with others whose earnings are likely to have been less affected, so many may have suffered smaller hits to their living standards than otherwise⁸⁵. Those who are/were not supported by other earners, however, (for instance, some lone parents), are likely to be particularly vulnerable. Lower-income households are generally less resilient to falls in income, due to spending a higher proportion of their incomes on 'essential goods' (e.g. groceries, household bills)⁸⁶. They are also more likely to be in debt or have low cash savings. Finally, the poorest households who were out of work before this crisis, might be relatively better protected due to receiving a greater proportion of their income from benefits (which have seen increases due to recent measures put into place)⁸⁷. However, the crisis may still make it more difficult for these households to ultimately re-enter the labour market, putting them at greater risk long term.
92. There is also a concern that those from lower-socio-economic backgrounds and some protected characteristics may face difficult decisions if their only way to get to work is by taking public transport, and they are not able to work from home.

Restrictions on movement and restrictions on gatherings

Regulations 6 and 7 set out restrictions on movement and restrictions on gatherings. Specifically, they give effect to the following:

⁸⁴ IFS (2020) Sector shutdowns during the coronavirus crisis: which workers are most exposed?

⁸⁵ ONS (2020) Living costs and food survey

⁸⁶ ONS (2020) Living costs and food survey

⁸⁷ HMT analysis

- i) that no person should leave their home without a reasonable excuse. A non-exhaustive list of specified examples of “reasonable excuse” are given, such as to obtain essential goods e.g. food and medical supplies, to take exercise or to seek medical assistance (among several others).
- ii) that public gatherings of two or more persons are prohibited, other than those who live in a household or in specified instances such as to assist a house move, provide emergency assistance or for essential work purposes.

The easements introduced on 10 May, and enacted in legislation on 13 May include allowing people to go outside to exercise (with the removal of guidance suggesting this should only be once a day), accessing outside sports courts, exercising and enjoying open air recreation by themselves, with members of their household, or with one member of another household.

As part of Step Two of the Roadmap strategy, the Government will further open up outdoor space, e.g. National Trust and other private gardens, sculpture parks and drive-in cinemas.

The government is also considering the introduction of household bubbling for a maximum of two households, where one of those is a single occupant household. The analysis below begins to incorporate the equality impacts of the general bubbling concept.

Age

- 93. We have identified impacts under limb 1 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 2 and 3.
- 94. In a survey by Britain Thinks, younger respondents were more likely to report that they are not coping as well as usual (42% among 18-24 year olds), with this decreasing gradually by age bracket (among 65+ year olds only 20% reported the same).⁸⁸ These groups are likely to benefit from the easing of restrictions of going outside and improved access to e.g. sports facilities.
- 95. Of NHS reported COVID-19 hospital deaths, 91% of these were of 60+ year olds, as of 3 May 2020.⁸⁹ Older people over 70 who fall into the vulnerable category are experiencing a heightened level of social distancing. They are more likely to be isolated, or less able to mitigate the social isolation arising from lockdown with technological solutions however, movement data from O2 suggests that people in the age range of 65+ saw the greatest increase in mobility (29 April). The NHS Volunteer Responders are providing telephone support to individuals at risk of loneliness as a consequence of isolation. Vulnerable individuals are now able to self-refer into the programme. Older people or those with dementia might see negative impacts on their wellbeing by changes to their routine or contacts (see disability section). However, the health impact on people over 70, compared to not making the

⁸⁸ Table 1 <https://britainthinks.com/pdfs/Covid19-Diaries-Data-Tables-April-2020.pdf>

⁸⁹ NHS England and NHS Improvement (2020) COVID-19 all announced deaths 4 May 2020

Regulations, is said to be positive because of the higher fatality rate among older people. Further, 95% of all local councils already have helplines for vulnerable residents. This is for both reactive and proactive support and would benefit older people. Older groups may benefit from improved freedom to go outside, but the shielding advice will continue to dissuade many from doing so (shielding is covered below). And while older people may be more likely to live alone, the guidance will remain that those aged 70 and over should take particular care to minimise contact with others outside their household and so may therefore not fully benefit from this relaxation.

96. Older people living alone could benefit from the introduction of bubbling households and reestablishing contact with another household of friends or family. However, if this person is shielding, then the other household would also be advised to shield. This would be difficult for many households of working age individuals to do, meaning that options for people shielding to bubble may be more limited.
97. Sport participation declines with age with 70% of 16-34 years olds participating, compared to 61% of 55-74 year olds⁹⁰. Younger people may therefore benefit more from the reopening of sports courts. However it may also particularly benefit people who have found it harder to be active during the pandemic, which includes older people, according to Sport England research.

Disability

98. We have identified impacts under limb 2 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 1 and 3.
99. Many disabled people have common health conditions including mental health conditions like anxiety and depression and musculoskeletal disorders⁹¹. Restrictions on gathering and movement may exacerbate conditions where people generally access face to face services in the community to help them manage conditions
100. The health impact for people with some forms of disability compared with not making the Regulations, is said to be positive where they face a higher fatality rate. Groups who are clinically extremely vulnerable are those with certain types of cancer or undergoing certain cancer treatments, people with severe respiratory conditions, people with diseases and errors of metabolism that increase the risk of infections, solid organ transplant recipients, and those on immunosuppressive therapies.⁹²
101. Nonetheless, COVID-19 is presenting this vulnerable group of individuals, who rely on a range of services and often specialist support in the community, with a unique

⁹⁰ Sport England Active Lives Survey report 2019

⁹¹ DWP (2020). The employment of disabled people. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/the-employment-of-disabled-people-2019>

⁹² <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>

set of challenges because of insufficient staffing and services. We would expect social distancing to exacerbate mental health issues for people with learning disabilities and autistic people (LD&A) as they do not have access to the same community services. Managing challenging behaviours at home is important to prevent escalation and possible admission to hospital. There is also a risk of existing health inequalities being compounded as a result of Covid 19, which may have longer term implications including costs for health and care services.

102. For example, we know that 70-80% of autistic people will have a mental health problem at some point in their lives. We have emerging evidence that social distancing is exacerbating this as people who relied on community services no longer have access to these to support their mental health and wellbeing. We are hearing from stakeholders that autistic people and those with learning disabilities are becoming distressed as a result of changes to routine, loss of care team through illness/self-isolation or just not being able to do usual activities. Managing challenging behaviours at home to prevent escalation of need, breakdown of community placements and admission to a mental health hospital is important. Such breakdowns of community placements would place greater stress on NHS services and Local Authority commissioners at a time when we are trying to alleviate pressure on these services.
103. Some people with a learning disability may be more vulnerable to becoming seriously ill if they contract COVID-19 because of higher prevalence of some health conditions that put them at risk amongst people with a learning disability. Up to the week ending 10th May, 467 people with learning disabilities have died due to COVID-19⁹³. Respiratory disease is one of the most common causes of death of people with a learning disability. The third annual report of the Learning Disabilities Mortality Review Programme found that in people with learning disabilities, the most frequent causes of death by ICD-10 chapter were diseases of the respiratory system (19% of reviewed deaths). Pneumonia, or aspiration pneumonia, were identified as causes of death in 41% of reviews - conditions which are potentially treatable, if caught in time.
104. Pneumonia and aspiration pneumonia have a higher prevalence within the learning disability population than in the general population and people with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) are particularly susceptible to respiratory problems, with respiratory disease and especially pneumonia, the leading cause of death for people with PMLD. Learning disability in and of itself is not listed as a reason for shielding but social distancing measures will help mitigate risk for those people with other underlying health conditions.
105. We know anecdotally that the social distancing guidance is impacting on people's routines which are essential to keeping autistic people and those with a learning disability well. There are also issues about autistic people and those with learning disabilities not always understanding the social distancing rules necessitating police

⁹³<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/covid-19-deaths-of-patients-with-a-learning-disability-notified-to-leder/>

involvement, which could be avoided with the right preventative support in place. We know that it is crucial for individuals to go outside and exercise in order to manage their behaviour and keep well.

106. The disturbance of people's routine can lead to an increase in challenging behaviour that puts people at risk of being admitted into hospital for care and treatment. We also know that people with learning disabilities and autism who are admitted into hospital under the Mental Health Act are in places far away from their homes and experience significant delays in discharge which is distressing for the individuals and their families. For individuals who are already in placements, an increase in the presentation of challenging behaviour could result in a placement breakdown and needing to be cared for in a different location.
107. People with addictions amounting to a disability may struggle to access their usual support networks during lockdown, for example face-to-face meetings are not running, but mutual aid groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous⁹⁴ and Narcotics Anonymous⁹⁵ have moved their offering online. These meetings are reported to be running well and engaging different types of users, for example more women are attending alcoholics anonymous online meetings. Drug and alcohol treatment services continue to operate a limited service in line with national guidance⁹⁶, focusing on harm reduction initiatives, Opioid Substitution Therapy (OST) and remote treatment provision. The Government is also introducing emergency legislation to enable pharmacists to dispense longer prescriptions for essential services (such as methadone), to reduce the risk of face-to-face transmission and support drug users to self-isolate as effectively as possible.
108. Disabled people in live-in institutions will be particularly affected by the inability to receive visits from immediate family (particularly as they may have additional difficulties using technology to communicate).⁹⁷ As a result of this NHS England has recently changed their clinical guidance to ensure that individuals, such as autistic people and those with a learning disability, are able to still have visits with their relatives, either in person or through digital technology where appropriate.
109. We have heard, anecdotally, that people with physical and learning disabilities are struggling to access food delivery slots or visit the supermarkets because they are finding the social distancing measures in place too overwhelming or confusing and this is impacting on their physical and mental health. There is now support for disabled people through the NHS Volunteers Programme, Defra's Food Access Scheme and through Local Authorities to ensure disabled people are able to receive food shopping.

⁹⁴ <https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Members/Coronavirus-News>

⁹⁵ <https://ukna.org/>

⁹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-commissioners-and-providers-of-services-for-people-who-use-drugs-or-alcohol/covid-19-guidance-for-commissioners-and-providers-of-services-for-people-who-use-drugs-or-alcohol>

⁹⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/mar/24/my-sister-learning-disability-cant-visit-coronavirus>

110. A number of retailers are aiming to improve access for the blind and partially sighted during the crisis, through steps to help them socially distance. Several supermarkets have been working with the Royal National Institute of Blind People on new best practices, such as tape on checkout screens to make them more visible and announcing social distancing measures rather than relying on signs alone.
111. Some retailers offer support for customers with hidden conditions such as autism, diabetes, hearing loss or multiple sclerosis by offering sunflower lanyards in store. The lanyard identifies the customer as having a hidden disability so staff are aware they may need some more help or extra time.
112. Many retailers offer an elderly and vulnerable shopping hour on certain days of the week. Anyone identifying themselves as a member of either of these categories is welcome to shop at these times without having to provide specific proof.
113. To address needs arising directly from COVID-19 and to mitigate against its negative impacts, DHSC has taken steps which include:
- a. along with NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSEI) are jointly hosting a weekly webinar with learning disability and autism stakeholders to discuss emerging issues and how these can be resolved;
 - b. working closely with learning disability and autism charities to develop bids for government funding that will boost their online and telephone service capacity to upscale their support offer and prevent the deterioration of the physical and mental health;
 - c. working closely with the Disability Unit to identify which funding support programmes provided by the Government can be accessed by charities supporting disabled people.
 - d. engaging with the Disability Unit, Public Health England and NHS England to improve the accessibility of government guidance for disabled people. This includes producing easy read, audio and BSL versions;
 - e. publication of a strategy to support the medical and caring workforce and to highlight the needs of people with physical and learning disabilities, complex needs and autism, which recognises the concerns of the adult social care sector.
114. Individuals with severe mental illnesses may be more affected by the social distancing measures due to increased barriers to access face-to-face support and reduced access to food and medication. Furthermore, withdrawal from psychotropic medication such as antidepressants can have severe clinical side effects. DHSC has now opened up the NHS Volunteer Responder programme to allow individuals with severe mental illnesses to self-refer for help accessing food and medication and check in and chat phone calls to prevent loneliness.
115. We know that 850,000 people in the UK have dementia and 675,000 in England. DHSC is bringing forward research to support the response to COVID-19, including a project on the best ways to mitigate the psychological and social impact of COVID-19

on people with dementia living in the community and their family carers. This research builds on the IDEAL research funded by Alzheimer's Society (and previously by the joint NIHR/ESRC initiative on dementia care), and is funded via the NIHR Older People and Frailty PRU. Work has already started with phased outputs to August 2020. The research and outputs will focus on how people with dementia and their carers should stay safe through the crisis, and public health risk reduction messages which should continue to apply as people isolate. We have also gathered some anecdotal evidence about how people with dementia are being impacted. For example, they are more likely to face further isolation and confusion, as well as practical problems such as shopping.

116. There is also anecdotal evidence that social distancing rules were causing anxiety because people with dementia may have difficulties with understanding it and forgetful of the rules e.g. understanding how much a 2m distance is. Working age people with dementia may now have heightened concerns about their financial situation and prospect of job loss - already a concern prior to COVID-19. Exercises, such as walking, are important for living well with the condition but we have anecdotal evidence that confusion about rules on social distancing is having an impact on daily activities
117. **Disability groups** such as autistic people and those with learning disabilities, may also gain particular benefits from increased access to outside space. The amendment regulations allowing people to go out for open air recreation will also encourage that others – e.g. those with a mental health condition – can benefit from more time outside.
118. Some disabled people who are more at risk of anxiety and social isolation could be expected to benefit substantially from the 'bubbling' policy if introduced. However, disabled people may not feel they have a real "choice" to decide who to bubble with, as they may choose people who are able to best support their needs rather than provide the social interaction needed. This could also increase the exposure of Covid-19 to disabled people who are already increasingly anxious about letting people in their homes.
119. Disabled people that are vulnerable or shielding may also be limited in their bubbling options as this would also require their bubbled household to shield. Furthermore, those living with carers will not have the option to bubble with other households, unless they bubble with a single occupancy household.

Gender reassignment

120. We have identified impacts under limb 1 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 2 and 3.
121. The National Advisor for LGBT Health undertook a survey of LGBT organisations in the first two weeks of lockdown to ask about the challenges their service users were

facing. Issues raised included: worsening isolation, especially amongst older LGBT people living alone; hostile home environments, which is a particular issue for young people living in households which are LGBT-phobic; risk of domestic abuse, family breakdown and homelessness; financial difficulties through loss of earnings; concerns about gender identity service waiting times and cancellation of surgery or treatments; concerns about sexual health, substance misuse; the lack of information and support for young people and LGBT individuals with other medical conditions e.g. cancer; and the impact on LGBT refugees and asylum seekers. These risks have been echoed in a briefing produced by the LGBT Foundation on the impacts of Covid19 for LGBT people⁹⁸.

122. There are concerns around young trans people who are isolated in homes with families who are not supportive of their trans status or gender identity too, with implications for physical and mental health. The National LGBT Survey 2017 found that 48% of transgender respondents had experienced a negative incident due to being LGBT or being thought to be LGBT involving someone that they lived with in the 12 months leading up to the survey.⁹⁹ Government is in close contact with the LGBT third sector and key frontline organisations which have been adapting their services during the lockdown.
123. There is some limited evidence indicating that incidence of mental health problems is high for transgender people.¹⁰⁰ There is also some limited evidence to suggest that trans youth may have a higher prevalence rate of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) than the general population.¹⁰¹ The current disruption to usual routines may be of particular challenge to these groups.
124. Those undergoing gender reassignment may be unable to access hormones from the GP, have gender affirming surgery cancelled or face increased waiting times to see trained counsellors or professionals, which would impact their mental health. Provisional results from survey by the LGBT Foundation¹⁰² found that as of 23 April, 24% of respondents reported that there was medication that they are unable to access or that they were worried that they might not be able to access (although this may not only affect those undergoing gender reassignment). 16% of respondents said they had been unable to access healthcare for non-COVID-19 related issues.¹⁰³

⁹⁸ LGBT Foundation briefing on the impacts of Covid 19 for LGBT people:
<https://lgbt.foundation/coronavirus/impact>

⁹⁹ Government Equalities Office (2018) The National LGBT Survey Research Report, July 2018.

¹⁰⁰ Hudson-Sharp, N and Metcalf, H (2016) Inequalities among lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups in the UK: an evidence review. National Institute of Economic and Social Research

¹⁰¹ Glidden et al (2016) Gender Dysphoria and Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Systematic Review of the Literature

¹⁰² LGBT Foundation <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1CiNrIKHBSpz69-z7ei65SHfpflneoEha>

¹⁰³ Please note that these findings are provisional and subject to change once the fieldwork is completed.

125. As a response to the COVID-19 situation and the Government's social distancing measures, NHS England has advised GPs on a number of measures to ensure that patients continue to access appropriate treatments and prescriptions, such as advice that practices should consider putting all suitable patients on electronic repeat dispensing.
126. NHS Trusts that host a Gender Identity Clinic are complying with national advice to prevent face-to-face contact unless urgent. Outpatient mental health services and sexual health services should be accessed by phone or video-link, where possible. The British Association of Gender Identity Specialists has issued a statement on managing hormone treatments during the pandemic.¹⁰⁴ They also provide information for patients on hormone therapy during the pandemic.¹⁰⁵
127. Provisional results from an ongoing survey by the LGBT Foundation¹⁰⁶ found that as of 23 April, 10% of LGBT respondents reported that they do not feel safe where they are currently staying and 18% were concerned that their situation would lead to substance or alcohol misuse, or that it would trigger a relapse.¹⁰⁷ The Albert Kennedy Trust, working with young people at risk of homelessness, has reported a 30% increase in referrals from young people living in hostile or abusive environments or finding themselves homeless since the pandemic began, with a significant increase in self-referrals from 16-17 year olds. These already vulnerable young people are reporting worsening mental health and wellbeing, increased abuse at home, risk taking sexual behaviours and financial difficulties and job losses.
128. Opening Doors London, who provide information and support for older LGBT+ individuals have reported an increased demand of their services¹⁰⁸. The National Domestic Abuse Helpline, Galop, and other specialist services continue to support trans people. And, as part of a UK-wide package of support, £360 million will be directly allocated by government departments to charities providing key services and supporting vulnerable people during the crisis.
129. Leaving the house more often could assist those **LGBT people** who experience specific difficulties in the home environment relating to their gender identity. For example 48% of transgender respondents to the LGBT survey report a negative incident due to being LGBT involving someone that they lived with in the 12 months leading up to the survey.
130. Individuals at the highest risk of isolation within their households, such as trans people, could be expected to benefit substantially from social 'bubbling' if introduced, if able to bubble with a household of single occupancy of their choice. However, the

¹⁰⁴ <https://gic.nhs.uk/gp-support/issues-around-hormone-therapy-due-to-the-coronavirus-situation/>

¹⁰⁵ <https://gic.nhs.uk/info-support/hormone-therapy-during-the-covid-19-outbreak-patient-information/>

¹⁰⁶ LGBT Foundation <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1CiNrIKHBSpz69-z7ei65SHfpflneoEha>

¹⁰⁷ Please note that these findings are provisional and subject to change once the fieldwork is completed.

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.openingdoorslondon.org.uk/appeal/help-us-reduce-isolation>

restrictions on bubbling as set out above would make it difficult for such individuals to exploit these benefits.

Pregnancy and maternity

131. We have identified impacts under limb 1 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 2 and 3.
132. Based on the data available, there is very little evidence to suggest that pregnant women in their first or second trimester are any more at risk than the general population. Pregnant women are more at risk if they have underlying conditions or if they are in their third trimester of pregnancy¹⁰⁹. There are therefore health benefits to this group of pregnant women, which counterbalance the negative impacts.
133. Postnatal Depression is a depressive illness which affects more than 1 in every 10 women within a year of giving birth.¹¹⁰ Social support from friends and family members as well as home visits from health professionals can be significant protective factors against postnatal depression. However, shielding measures may reduce access to social support for many new mothers and therefore increase their likelihood of developing postnatal depression.
134. Maternity services are facing significant staff shortages due to COVID-19 with many midwifery staff either ill, shielded or self-isolating. This is likely to impact on the availability and quality of services including choice of place of birth and continuity of carer models during the pandemic. NHS England and Improvement are supporting maternity services to coordinate staff to ensure safe care is provided, including consolidating staff and services in a smaller number of locations. This means temporarily suspending some home birth services and birthing centres and consolidating intrapartum care in obstetric units.
135. Women may find it harder to access antenatal and postnatal community health services during the pandemic due to the prioritisation of families who are more vulnerable. Women are more likely to access services using digital or remote technologies. This could potentially exacerbate feelings of isolation and depression in some women.
136. To ensure that appropriate care is available for pregnant women, and a proportionate approach is taken to meet their needs and balance risks, a number of steps have been taken:
 - a. the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG), the Royal College of Midwives (RCM) and the Royal College of Anaesthetists (RCA) are working closely with NHSE, the four UK health departments, system regulators, academics, etc. to produce guidance and information for women which is kept under constant review to ensure the advice to women and

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/downloads/files/ukoss/annual-reports/UKOSS%20COVID-19%20Paper%20pre-print%20draft%2011-05-20.pdf>

¹¹⁰ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/post-natal-depression/> .

clinicians is proportionate and reflective of the various stages of the course of the pandemic and emerging evidence;

- b. following passage of the Coronavirus Act, the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) set up the COVID-19 emergency temporary register on 27 March and invited nursing and midwifery professionals who left the register up to three years ago to join. In addition, varied emergency education standards have been introduced to enable the last six months in the final year of undergraduate midwifery degrees to be spent in supervised clinical placements. Students in England who have student loans will be offered a salary at pay band 4 for this period as an incentive;
 - c. as of 5th May, 874 midwives have expressed an interest in returning to work. This figure is made up of 743 registered midwives and 131 dual registered midwives. 180 midwives have deployed to front line service
 - d. as of 1st May, we have 1290 student midwives (Y3, last 6 months) and an additional 1076 student midwives (Y2 and Y3 first 6 months), opting to be deployed in service
 - e. maternity services are using remote means to provide additional antenatal and postnatal consultations. Remote consulting enables greater compliance with social distancing measures recommended for pregnant women and maternity staff; and
 - f. other practical support, such as the procurement of 16,000 blood pressure monitors for distribution free of charge to ensure all can offer blood pressure self-monitoring for the 10% of pregnancies with chronic hypertension, gestational hypertension or pre-eclampsia.
137. Pregnant women and new mothers, who are at a heightened risk of mental health complications such as postnatal depression, would benefit from access to support from friends and family through social 'bubbling', if introduced, where this could be established with another single occupant household. However, there is evidence to suggest a higher risk for those in their third trimester of pregnancy, or with underlying conditions, and therefore bubbling could increase their exposure to the virus.

Race

138. We have identified impacts under limbs 1, 2 and 3 of the PSED, as set out below.
139. The ONS has produced new data showing that people from BAME communities are at greater risk of severe adverse outcome from Covid-19¹¹¹. PHE have announced they will conduct a review analysing how different factors, including ethnicity, impact on Covid19 outcomes¹¹².

¹¹¹ Coronavirus (COVID-19) related deaths by ethnic group, England and Wales: 2 March 2020 to 10 April 2020 which can be found here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/articles/coronavirusrelateddeathsbyethnicgroupenglandandwales/2march2020to10april2020>

¹¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/review-into-factors-impacting-health-outcomes-from-covid-19>

140. The new COVID-19 legislation may result in a higher proportion of individuals from ethnic minority communities having restricted access to **mental health**, learning disability, and autism services. In both the Black broad ethnic group and the Black Caribbean¹¹³ specific ethnic group, over 4,800 adults per 100,000 of the population used mental health, learning disabilities and autism services, this is the highest out of all ethnic groups for which ethnicity was reliably recorded. Under the new COVID-19 legislation there is a question as to whether this variance will increase or decrease during this period.
141. The current 'stay at home' restrictions give rise to particular concerns on **domestic violence**. Between April 2018 and March 2019, 5.7% of people aged 16 to 74 in England and Wales reported having been a victim of domestic abuse in the last 12 months. People of Mixed ethnicity (12.9%) were more likely to have experienced domestic abuse than White (5.6%) or Asian people (3.8%). In the Mixed and White ethnic groups, women were more likely than men to have experienced domestic abuse in the past year (see mitigations set out in paragraph 187).
142. There may be differential impacts of the restriction on movement depending on race resulting from **overcrowding or housing quality**. Poor housing conditions and overcrowded households could lead to a quicker transmission of COVID-19 if a member of their household is infected. In 2014 to 2017, around 2% of White British households experienced overcrowding, compared with 30% of Bangladeshi households (the highest percentage).
143. **Geography** is just one of a number of key factors that determine how vulnerable people are to COVID-19. In the UK, people in urban areas are more likely to spread the virus because of the higher population density, ample leisure amenities, a generally younger population, and a lot of people using crowded public transport. DHSC have noted that there has been a significantly higher rate of infection, and a higher number of overall cases in urban areas and cities, specifically London and the West Midlands, where ethnic minority groups are significantly more likely to live. People from Pakistani (99.1%), Bangladeshi (98.7%), and Black African (98.2%) backgrounds were most likely to live in an urban location. This would suggest that as BAME populations are more at risk, and that the effective enforcement of these measures would be to the benefit of this group.
144. Areas with high levels of **public transport use**, such as London, might see the virus spread quicker. A higher percentage of trips are made by public transport (in particular by bus) by people in ethnic minority groups. This would suggest that ethnic minority groups are more at risk, and that the effective enforcement of these measures would be to the benefit of this group.
145. We are working with the police to understand whether restrictions on movement has increased the risk or incidence of online abuse for minority groups. We are working

¹¹³<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/data-collections-and-data-sets/data-sets/mental-health-services-data-set>

with the police, civil society partners and social media platforms to encourage victim reporting of online hate crime during the pandemic. We do not hold data on whether the overall scale of online abuse has increased since social distancing measures were put in place.

146. Right wing extremists (RWEs) are almost certainly exploiting COVID-19 to target minority groups:
- high profile extremists have accused Muslims and other minorities of breaching lockdown measures, for example, by attending mosques, and criticised authorities for allowing them to do so; and
 - extremists taking advantage of anonymity on message-boards are using racist language, conspiracy theories and incitement to target Chinese people, Jews and people of non-white origin.

I&S

148. Anti-hate crime services such as CST and Tell Mama have reported hate groups disrupting online community events through 'Zoombombing'. These groups are developing guidance on how minorities can protect themselves from such incidents.
149. Initial data suggests that overall hate crime has decreased due to social distancing measures compared to the equivalent period last year. Initial indicators by the police shows variable hate crime trends since the first cases of COVID -19 were seen in the UK, representing an initial significant drop since social distancing measures began, followed by an increase in mid-April, and with most recent figures to the start of May showing reported hate crime trends stabilising and are likely to be comparable to reporting seen during the same period last year.
150. Despite the lack of high incident venues around such as pubs/ clubs, the police National Community Tensions Team (NCTT) assess the current stabilisation of hate crime figures is likely due to several factors including the ongoing frustrations of government guidelines and the perception of those who break them. It is assessed as likely this level of reporting will be maintained in the short term, although there is a realistic possibility it will increase the longer measures remain in place and once lockdown restrictions are eased. As a general trend, since social distancing measures were introduced, indicators of the national picture by the police suggests that overall hate crime reporting is likely to be comparable to reporting seen during the same period last year. This data is not sufficiently reliable to provide a definitive picture.
151. However, the general social discourse around Covid 19 may have contributed to an elevated number of hate crimes against specific groups with protected characteristics, most notably people of Chinese heritage and East/South East Asian communities. It is not clear whether social distancing policy itself is specifically contributing to the prevalence of such hate crimes. Extremists taking advantage of

anonymity on message boards are also using racist language, conspiracy theories and incitement to target Chinese people, Jews, Muslims and people of non-white origin.

152. Police recorded hate crime towards people of Chinese, Japanese and South East Asian heritage rose to a level approximately double that of the weekly average in 2019 by the middle of February. This increased number of reports was sustained in subsequent weeks but spiked noticeably in the week prior to the lockdown coming into effect. Since social distancing measures were put in place, the NCTT continues to observe a higher than average number of offences targeting Chinese, Japanese or South East Asian ethnicity, particularly those crimes that mention Covid-19. Numbers of crimes recorded against this group are routinely so low that single incidents can dramatically change the overall percentage of instances.
153. Police have begun to see a more recent increase in hate crime in mid-April compared to when social distancing measures were first implemented. They speculate this may be partly attributable to growing public frustration with the measures and attempts by the public to enforce such measures, with such incidents then escalating into abuse. However, the exact causes of such a rise cannot be determined with confidence.
154. Tensions and hate crime within the Gypsy, Roma & Traveller communities remain throughout the pandemic. This could be attributed to the fact that local authorities have provided temporary stopping places during the pandemic, which has increased tensions amongst the settled communities and online abuse.
155. Consideration should be given to the effects of reopening sectors staffed by a higher proportion of people with protected characteristics. In such cases, greater visibility of those staff, combined with extremist narratives blaming minorities for contributing to the spread of the disease, may lead to increases in hate crime.
156. Outdoor access may disproportionately benefit people from **ethnic minority backgrounds** who are more likely to live in urban areas – for example around 2% of White British households experienced overcrowding, compared with 30% of Bangladeshi households (the highest percentage).
157. There are different participation rates in sport across different race groups - for example 65% of white people participate in sport compared to 58% of Black people and 54% of Asian people¹¹⁴. Certain groups may therefore benefit relatively more from the reopening of sports courts, although participation varies by sport.
158. Enabling greater social contact via household bubbling, if introduced, may be met by hesitation from ethnic minority groups, in particular given the media attention on the number of people from ethnic minority backgrounds who have died from COVID-19.

¹¹⁴ Sport England Active Lives Survey report 2019

159. Some ethnic minorities are more likely to live in larger households (ie with more children, and/or multi-generational - a feature of several Bangladeshi households for example) if they were to 'bubble' with other larger households, then the risk of exposure to or spread of COVID would be greater than if two single person households 'bubble'.

Religion and belief

160. We have identified impacts under limbs 1, 2 and 3 of the PSED, as set out below.
161. Restrictions on gatherings and the closure of places of worship will have an adverse impact on many people of faith, particularly those with religious festivals during the period. These restrictions apply across all faiths. Following the publication of the UK Government's roadmap to rebuild Britain, a series of ministerial-led Taskforces have been set up to develop plans for how and when closed sectors can reopen safely. This includes The Places of Worship Taskforce tasked with developing the phased approach to the re-opening of places of worship, and development of supporting guidance. In addition, the multi-faith charity Faith Action has been contracted by MHCLG to engage with different faith community groups and places of worship across the country to ensure a breadth of views are reflected in the Taskforce considerations. The Minister for Faith has also held a series of roundtables and one on one meetings with faith and community leaders in recent weeks and will continue to do so in the weeks ahead to support planning to enable the phased and safe reopening of POW.
162. There has been some challenge that the closure of places of worship is an unjustifiable infringement against Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which provides a right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This includes the right to manifest in public or in private, one's religion or belief. This is however a qualified right. It is subject to necessary limitations in the interest of public safety, such as for the protection of health in order to protect the fundamental Article 2 right to life of the population. Article 2 remains the overriding concern for the protection of the Nation's health as a whole. The restriction on places of worship being closed does not stop people manifesting their religious beliefs or celebrating religious festivals at home with members of the same household. We consider this current approach necessary and proportionate to address the risk to life posed by COVID-19. To ensure close monitoring of the continued need for the closure of places of worship and assisting religious communities to prepare for any easing of restrictions, the Government created on 15 May a 'Places of Worship Taskforce'. The Taskforce will assist the Government in developing a plan for phased and safe reopening of places of worship, when the evidence supports such a step. The taskforce is currently considering the practical application of three proposed amendments to the social distancing regulations: weddings, post-burial and cremation rituals, and individual worship/prayer in a place of worship. Further detail on these three amendments to ease restrictions can be found in Paragraphs 173 – 175.

163. All major faiths are represented. In addition to the Taskforce, we continue to regularly engage with Faith stakeholders and Faith leaders to ensure that everyone can continue to properly manifest their religious beliefs in the current exceptional circumstances.
164. **Individual worship/prayer in places of worship.** As part of the easing of the regulations we are considering the practicalities of allowing individuals to access places of worship for individual prayer, worship and contemplation. Individual worship is particularly important for Christianity (in particular Catholicism), and Sikhism. Stakeholder engagement, in particular from the Christian faith, have expressed a wish for this to happen ahead of the reopening of places of worship at Stage 3 of the Roadmap to Recovery strategy.
165. Within most faith traditions, individual worship can be undertaken at home. The practise of individual prayer within a place of worship can also take place, although for some places of worship, such as Jewish synagogues, they are generally used exclusively for communal prayer.
166. Within most faiths, there are time specific prayers, services and ceremonies throughout the day. For example, congregational prayers usually take place five times a day in Islam, Jumma Friday midday Sabbath prayer, and in Sikhism there are 5 prayers, Banis', that are recited every day. These are usually communal, however during the current lockdown they have either been cancelled, carried out online or carried out without any congregation present (for example within Gurdwaras where the Guru Granth Sahib (living Guru) resides). We anticipate that it is highly likely that if PoW were opened for individual prayer there would be a strong preference for individuals to want to attend during the times of these set prayers. There are a number of significant festivals coming up which we anticipate will also attract higher attendance too should a place of worship be open for individual prayer, for example Muharram (20-30th Aug) in Islam, Martyrdom of the 5th Sikh Guru (16th June) in Sikhism, Shavuot (28-30 May) in Judaism.
167. There are concerns that places of worship, particularly in urban settings with a high-density population, would not be able to safely accommodate large numbers of worshippers for individual prayer. The size of religious buildings and the congregations will vary greatly, and therefore it would not be possible to impose blanket maximum numbers. We are considering how individual places of worship may be able to practically manage the re-opening for individual prayer – for example limiting attendance to a maximum capacity of one person at a time. This approach would ensure contact is kept at a minimum, and the management of ensuring social distancing is maintained is not unduly put on the religious leader to enforce. We will be testing these policy considerations with the Places of Worship Taskforce, to ensure any changing of the regulations can be practically applied for all faiths and their places of worship.
168. To adhere to social distancing regulations while still practicing their faiths, many groups have taken to livestreaming services and participating in rituals through virtual

online communities: e.g. virtual Iftar. However, the take-up for this has not been uniform, as it does pose challenges for some faith communities. For example, the Orthodox Jewish community do not use technology on Shabbat or festivals. Charedi Jewish communities have also raised concerns about comparably reduced access to technology and lower technological literacy.

169. We are currently conducting engagement with religious leaders of these communities to understand the issue better, and explore how access to technology can be improved as and opportunities to share innovative ways of using technology which still adhere to faith practises and belief.
170. **Weddings:** Currently weddings and civil ceremonies of any sort are not included on the list of permitted reasons to travel in the Regulations and are likely to breach the social distancing measures. Marriages and civil partnerships under the special procedure- so-called deathbed ceremonies- for those who are seriously ill and not expected to recover, are taking place in some cases. In these circumstances the Registrar General will issue a licence for the marriage or civil partnership to proceed *where the local authority considers it is safe to do so* in line with PHE guidance.
171. We are considering changes that would need to be made to current social distancing measures to allow for small weddings indoors and outdoors to resume whilst ensuring any weddings can be conducted in a way which reduces risk to the attendees to the lowest reasonably practical level. We have identified that weddings not taking place may disproportionately affect some religious communities; for some faiths, it is customary for weddings to take place at specific times in the year, for example for some ultra-orthodox Jewish communities to marry on lag b'omer in mid-late May. However, the current restrictions place limitations on all couples marrying in their faith at a time of their choosing or that holds particular significance for the couple.
172. We have been considering the quoracy requirements for different faiths, as well as the number of households a wedding may bring together. To ensure all faiths could hold a wedding that was viable for their faith practises, 15 attendees would need to be present (the minimum required for some Jewish ceremonies to include the quorum of 10 to form a Minyan). Another consideration is length of service; some faith weddings take place over an extended period of days. We are currently considering how a wedding could be conducted for all faiths and beliefs taking into account faith practises and rituals, whilst ensuring the risk to the attendees is kept at the lowest reasonably practical level.
173. We are also considering the types of permitted venues that could conduct small weddings. Some places of worship are not registered to conduct legal marriages. Not all weddings take place in places of worship or are between those who hold a faith or belief. There will need to be consideration for access to register offices, and other approved venues. We are currently considering how we ensure any changes do not unfairly disadvantage those with or without faith depending on permitted venues. We

will be testing these issues with faith leaders and representatives from all major faiths through the government's Places of Worship Taskforce.

174. Moreover, there is not necessarily a clear argument for advancing the celebration of certain religious or civil ceremonies (marriages) above others (e.g. funerals), ahead of the general opening of places and venues at which these would normally take place, which is due under Step 3 of the easing of lockdown measures. There is a clear public desire for greater freedoms to attend funerals of loved ones during this time, and therefore any relaxations that allow people to host public ceremonies would need to be considered alongside the wider policies on social contact and public gatherings.
175. **Post-Burial and Cremation Rituals:** Restrictions relating to funeral rites and subsequent commemorative events have significant impacts on some faith groups. However, the Government has sought to mitigate this by working closely with faith and community leaders. This replicates the approach adopted throughout the passage of the Coronavirus Act to ensure that the religious practices of the deceased are taken into account by Local Authorities as far as possible. Local Authorities are under an obligation to have regard to the deceased's wishes, religion and belief, as to their final committal, where known, in accordance with Section 58 and Schedule 28 to the Coronavirus Act 2020. It should be noted that non-religious people may likewise be unable to have funerals in line with their wishes.
176. **Funerals:** Despite the mitigations put in place, as a result of current social distancing and PPE prioritisation not all the deceased have been able to receive their preferred faith or belief rituals within hospital or care home settings, or within the funeral itself which can also negatively impact those grieving. However, this continues to be outweighed by the wider public health benefits and protections that the measures provide.
177. **Other Rituals:** Aside from weddings, many faith communities practice a range of rituals in relation to births, deaths and other milestones. Whilst many of these rituals can take place inside the home, there is a strong preference in many cases for these to be conducted within a place of worship. There are also a number of rituals that take place exclusively within places of worship, for example the Eucharist within Christianity, and Bar/Batmitzvahs in Judaism. Consideration of opening places of worship will take account of ritual practices of all faiths to ensure that all communities have equal opportunities to practice rituals associated with their faiths. This also includes belief communities who may require access to public/civic spaces to conduct certain rituals or practices associated with their belief system. We will be consulting on these issues with faith leaders and representatives from all major faiths via the government's Places of Worship Taskforce which is developing a plan to enable the phased and safe reopening of places of worship. At this stage, the Government will permit graveside rituals, such as Jewish gravestone-setting, which are important for such groups, so long as they fall within restricted gathering numbers (i.e. 6 people or two households).

178. The government will need to allow certain places of worship and community centres, where childcare facilities are hosted, to open for these specific circumstances. This is a necessary step to enable the policy, although it could give rise to concerns from faith groups on equality grounds, given places of worship are not yet open for collective worship or other rituals. The government believes the general equality benefits of opening childcare facilities outweighs these concerns and that the continued closure of places of worship for collective worship is justified on health grounds.
179. **Islamophobia:** we have observed some instances of non-Muslim public articulating a fear of/speculating that Muslim communities will not comply with social distancing regulations (particularly during Ramadan, and social distancing for funerals), for example through correspondence. Some stakeholders such as the Interfaith Network, Tell MAMA and the Community Security Trust have also raised concerns about far-right groups propagating fear and disinformation, predominantly targeting Muslim, but also Jewish, communities. We have been clear in challenging this narrative; COVID-19 is no excuse for targeting or discriminating against people from any background in the UK. We continue to communicate that, if anyone has any concerns about discrimination or hate incidents, they should not hesitate to report this to the police. We stand ready to support local authorities as and when needed to engage with and support their communities, and we are working with the police to ensure we're aware of the latest issues being raised by forces.
180. We have well-established ways of working with the food industry and together we are working around the clock to ensure people have the food and products they need. Industry has adapted quickly to these changes in demands, and food supply into and across the UK is resilient.
181. Religious and cultural traditions are important and that is why we value a diverse and resilient supply chain. We have not been made aware of a shortage of kosher or halal products or any specific problems with the resilience of the kosher or halal food supply chain. But we will continue to monitor the situation.
182. The free food parcels offer for clinically extremely vulnerable people is an emergency response to a very fast-moving situation to support those in greatest need of supplies. The food parcels are a standardised package designed to be suitable for the majority of people, as reviewed by nutritionists. There is therefore a chance that not all the food items in the parcel meet a particular person's dietary requirements. A letter is put in every food parcel stating that if the shielded person has any particular dietary needs that are not met through the contents of the box they should contact their Local Authority.

Sex

183. We have identified impacts under limb 1 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 2 and 3.

184. The health impact on men, compared with not having the social distancing measures in place, is positive because of the higher fatality rate among men. Men represent 57% of deaths involving COVID-19 in England and Wales up to 8 May 2020 as reported by ONS¹¹⁵.
185. In a survey by Britain Thinks, female respondents were more likely to indicate that they are not coping as well as usual due to the impact of coronavirus, at 34%, compared to 24% of male respondents.¹¹⁶
186. We would expect families living in cramped conditions with limited outdoor space will benefit from greater access to outside space. Single parents, who are more likely to be women, may benefit from more outdoor access with their children.
187. Single parents, who are also more likely to be women, could also experience particular benefits in expanding their support beyond the household. It could assist informal childcare arrangements and would help new mothers, who are at a heightened risk of mental health complications such as postnatal depression, to access support from friends and family. Clarifying that midwives and health visitors can visit the home would also contribute to improved support for new mothers.
188. There are disproportionate impacts on victims of domestic violence, who are predominantly women, of having to remain at home with their domestic abuser. As of 27 April 2020 calls to the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, run by Refuge, have spiked significantly during the lockdown – seeing an on average increase of around 50% in calls since lockdown measures began¹¹⁷.
189. Regulation 6(2) does contain provision that is relevant to this group by specifying that leaving home to prevent illness or injury or to escape a risk of harm constitutes a “reasonable excuse” (regulation 6(2)(m)), as does accessing critical public services (such as social services or services provided to victims of crime: regulation 6(2)(i)(ii) and (iv)). However, there are mitigations which are being considered in relation to the particular circumstances of domestic violence, and the police response.
190. In response to evidence and concerns that domestic abuse may be increasing as a result of the restrictions under the Regulations, the Government has taken the following steps to mitigate this impact:
- a. the Home Secretary launched a new public awareness raising campaign highlighting that if anyone is at risk of, or experiencing domestic abuse, help is still available;
 - b. a £750 million of HMT funding for the voluntary sector to support charities including those working on domestic abuse;

¹¹⁵ [ONS Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) roundup \(2020\)](#)

¹¹⁶ Table 1 <https://britainthinks.com/pdfs/Covid19-Diaries-Data-Tables-April-2020.pdf>

¹¹⁷ <https://www.refuge.org.uk/refuge-response-to-home-affairs-select-committee-report-on-domestic-abuse-during-covid-19/>

- c. additionally, the Home Secretary announced an additional £2 million to immediately bolster domestic abuse helplines and online support;
 - d. putting into the regulation the clear provision individuals can leave home to avoid injury or the risk of harm;
 - e. clarifying legal guidance for police that Domestic Violence Protection Orders that require perpetrators to leave the family home override the law on social distancing; and
 - f. working with domestic abuse charities and police to ensure that victims understand they should leave their home if they are under threat and that police and victims services are still there to assist them.
191. The NPCC have reported a drop of 37% in recorded rapes, a crime type which disproportionately affects women, during the lockdown period (up to 15 April)¹¹⁸. Allowing people greater freedom is likely to lead to a rise in this figure as victims will have greater opportunities to report crimes and potential perpetrators will have more opportunities to commit acts of sexual violence. However, it is important to remember that rape and sexual violence remain underreported crimes and therefore the initial drop in police figures may not correspond directly to an actual drop in cases.
192. Domestic abuse victims may be better able to seek help with the expansion of social contact (though there is a risk that their abuser takes control of the bubbling privilege in a way that further disadvantages the victim). Further data would be required to make a proper assessment of the 'bubbling' proposal, but the limited model is unlikely to have substantial impacts on victims of abuse. There could be unforeseen consequences, such as confusion over the rules and disagreement within households over the choice of who to bubble with. Perpetrators of domestic abuse may use the strict controls to their advantage, meaning that victims would not benefit. All of these aspects require careful consideration. The flexibility to leave the house for recreational purposes and meet one other person outside may be of more assistance to victims than bubbling at this stage.
193. Marginally more men participate in sport than women (65% of men vs 61% of women)¹¹⁹, and so may benefit relatively more from the reopening of sports courts, although participation varies by sport. However it may also particularly benefit people who have found it harder to be active during the pandemic, which includes women, according to Sport England research.

Sexual orientation

194. We have identified impacts under limbs 1, 2 and 3 of the PSED, as set out below.
195. Some gay men were worried about access to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) during quarantine. Provisional results from an ongoing survey by the LGBT

¹¹⁸ <https://news.npcc.police.uk/releases/police-chiefs-keep-reporting-crime-to-us-during-coronavirus-outbreak-we-are-still-here-for-you>

¹¹⁹ Sport England Active Lives Survey report 2019

Foundation found that 24% of LGBT respondents said that there is medication that they are unable to access or that they were worried that they might not be able to access.¹²⁰

196. There are concerns about young people who are isolated in homes with families who are not supportive of their sexual orientation. In the National LGBT Survey 2017, 29% of respondents had experienced a negative incident involving someone that they lived with due to being LGBT, or being thought to be LGBT, in the 12 months leading up to the survey. Of these respondents, 38% identified a parent or guardian as a perpetrator of the most serious incident. Around a quarter (24%) of respondents to the National LGBT Survey 2017 reported that they were not open about being LGBT with any family members that they lived with (excluding partners) in the 12 months preceding the survey. A similar proportion (25%) reported that they were not open about being LGBT with other people (excluding partners) that they lived with. The National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which includes services for LGB people, has reported an average increase of around 50% increase in call volume during the lockdown.¹²¹ Sources of advice and support will continue to be available to victims – including for example through the Galop LGBT+ helpline as well as the National Domestic Abuse Helpline.
197. Provisional results from an ongoing survey by the LGBT Foundation found that as of 23 April, 30% of LGBT respondents reported that they are living alone during this period, including 46% of respondents aged 50+¹²²¹²³. This suggests that older members of the LGB population may be particularly isolated.
198. There is evidence that LGB people's general and mental health is worse than that of heterosexual people.¹²⁴ Individuals from groups who already experience poorer outcomes in healthcare may be disproportionately affected by the wider healthcare implications of the current situation. Analysis has found that adults who identified as LGB were twice as likely as heterosexual adults to experience symptoms of common mental disorder (e.g. symptoms of anxiety or depression).¹²⁵ An online survey commissioned by Stonewall in 2017 found that 52% of LGBT respondents in Britain reported experiencing depression in the previous year.¹²⁶ Social distancing may make it harder to look after your mental health. The LGBT Foundation, a national charity which delivers advice, support, and information services to LGBT communities, has stated that calls to their LGBT+ helpline have doubled from the

¹²⁰ LGBT Foundation <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1CiNrIKHBSpz69-z7ei65SHfpflneoEha>

¹²¹ <https://www.refuge.org.uk/refuge-response-to-home-affairs-select-committee-report-on-domestic-abuse-during-covid-19/>

¹²² LGBT Foundation <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1CiNrIKHBSpz69-z7ei65SHfpflneoEha>

¹²³ Please note that these findings are provisional and subject to change once the fieldwork is completed.

¹²⁴ https://www.niesr.ac.uk/sites/default/files/publications/160719_REPORT_LGBT_evidence_review_NIESR_FINALPDF.pdf

National GP Patient Survey (2019)

¹²⁵ Institute for Social and Economic Research (2017) Understanding Society Insights 2017, University of Essex.

¹²⁶ Stonewall (2018) LGBT in Britain Health Report

same period in 2019.¹²⁷ Individuals at the highest risk of isolation within their households (e.g. **LGB groups** who may be more at risk of anxiety) could be expected to benefit substantially from expanding social bubbles, although the restricted model proposed by the Government will limit those benefits.

199. LGB people may not be accessing support when they need to due to fears of discrimination or poor treatment thus being more likely to reach an acute problem with their health:
- a. the National LGBT Survey 2017 found that 16% of respondents with a minority sexual orientation who accessed or tried to access health services had a negative experience because of their sexual orientation in the 12 months preceding the survey; and
 - b. research commissioned by GEO found that LGBT people's dissatisfaction with health services are largely driven by experiences of discrimination and a lack of staff knowledge on LGBT people's health needs. This could mean that LGBT people may be less likely to try to access healthcare for COVID-19 than non-LGBT people.
200. The National Advisor for LGBT Health has been working to identify and support the health needs of LGBT people during the COVID-19 outbreak and providing support to LGBT VCSE organisations. DHSC is aware of the potential risks of this beyond COVID-19 and it forms part of the ongoing work from the LGBT Action Plan. Communications campaigns are targeting the whole population, including LGB people.
201. LGBT Charity Galop has noted anecdotal evidence of an increase in online hate. The Government is in close contact with the LGBT third sector and key frontline organisations which have been adapting their services to support LGB people during the lockdown. We have announced that charities across the UK will receive a £750 million package of support to ensure they can continue their vital work during the COVID-19 outbreak. As part of a UK-wide package of support, £360 million will be directly allocated by government departments to charities providing key services and supporting vulnerable people during the crisis.

Socio-economic status

202. People on low incomes may benefit from enabling outdoor sports courts to open because they have been finding it harder to be active, according to Sport England research.

Enforcement

On Thursday 26 March, the Government introduced new Public Health Regulations, strengthening police and Local Authority enforcement powers, to reduce the spread of the virus, protect the NHS and save lives. These regulations gave the police the

¹²⁷ Pink News, (2020) LGBT+ helpline sees calls double as queer people fear being left with abusive families during coronavirus lockdown March 2020

powers they needed to ensure the public complied with the Prime Minister's instruction to remain at home and avoid all non-essential travel. On 10 May, the Prime Minister then set out the conditional roadmap to recovery and noted that some changes to lockdown measures could take place. The Public Health Regulations were amended to reflect these changes and came into effect on 13 May. Under Step One people have been allowed to partake in outdoor recreation that might not be considered exercise e.g. sunbathing and can now do this with one member of another household on a one-to-one basis, provided that social distancing is maintained.

The revised regulations also introduced increased Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for those not complying with the law. FPNs will now be £100 (or £50 if paid early) and the maximum amount that can be charged for repeat offences has increased to £3,200.

Step Two of the Roadmap will require a new approach to enforcement as we move away from the 'Stay at home' requirement, to regulations that are more focused on the things that you cannot do, especially outside of the home. This will create different challenges for the police, but overall should improve the enforceability of the regime. The analysis below is drawn from the current regime, but remains relevant under Step Two.

Increasing fixed penalty notices

203. Raising fine amounts increases the potential to have a negative impact on those groups who are less able to pay and therefore more likely to be prosecuted. The data shows that young men are the most likely to receive fines and therefore increases in fine amounts could impact this group.
204. Anecdotally, we are aware of FPNs being issued to homeless people (for gathering in breach of Regulation 7) and concerns locally that - since the recipient cannot afford to pay even the first FPN the increase in fine is not a deterrent. However, the police have been advised to use their discretion in such cases and will apply the 4-step escalation process of engage, explain, encourage and then enforce. Similarly, the new higher amounts are so great they may prove a disincentive to pay the FPN (with people instead choosing to take their chance in Court). The increase in fines may also prove confusing for police.

However, increasing the fine amount by a small sum mitigates this concern. We deem it necessary and proportionate to enable the police to continue enforcing the social distancing measures, in order to manage the public health risks.

Age

205. We have identified potential impacts under limbs 1 and 3 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limb 2.

206. The data states that around two-thirds of those issued with Fixed Penalty Notices were under 35 (37% were 18 to 24, 18% were aged 25-29 and 14% 30-34). We do not at this stage believe data on the issuing of fixed-penalty notices (FPN) showing a skew towards younger groups is due to discriminatory practices. Initial polling work suggests likely higher levels of non-compliance among younger people, and enforcement disparities in age are broadly in line with offending patterns more generally. As such, we believe disparities are likely to reflect behaviours among younger people.
207. The government has been clear that police enforcement of these Regulations must be proportionate and fair. Enforcement that is perceived to be unfair or heavy handed could damage relationships with people with those protected characteristics. This has the potential to undermine the social distancing measures more broadly. Therefore police guidance has been clear that enforcement should be the last resort. The police are expected to follow the principles under policing by consent, to work to engage, explain, encourage and then enforce. We will continue to work closely with the police to track community impacts and associated risks.

Disability

208. We have identified impacts under limb 1 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 2 and 3.
209. The Disabled Police Association has reported that the hearing impaired community have complained that there have been a number of instances where hearing impairment has been mistaken for civil disobedience. Similar concerns have been raised by those representing people with neuro-diverse conditions and sight impairment. Guidance to officers has been updated, and FAQs clarified. We do not therefore believe that there are systemic disparities against disabled people in relation to enforcement.

Gender reassignment

210. We have not identified any impacts for this group regarding enforcement of the regulations, under any of the PSED limbs.

Pregnancy and maternity

211. We have not identified any impacts for this group regarding enforcement of the regulations, under any of the PSED limbs.

Race

212. We have identified impacts under limbs 1 and 3 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limb 2.
213. Due to the significant force-to-force variation in enforcement it is difficult to say whether the national racial disparities in the data are accurate however it is likely that some racial disparities do exist. For example, in the 2011 census Black people constituted 3.5% of the population, but account for 5% of the Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued (after excluding 'not stated' data). The age of the 2011 census data

makes it difficult to assess how accurate these disparity figures may be as since 2011 there have been changes to the number and proportion of BAME people in the UK. In addition, Asian people account for 13% of FPNs and 7% of the population.

214. We cannot conclude based on these disparities alone that they are due to unlawful discrimination. This may, for instance, reflect the fact that BAME groups tend to have a younger population profile when compared to those from White ethnic groups.
215. To be certain whether or not there has been disproportionality in the issuing of FPNs, the Government needs to access the record-level data to compare observed and expected rates of enforcement notices at force level. The National Police Chiefs' Council have agreed in principle to share this data with the Government and are in the process of making this happen.
216. As we see in the data, people from some ethnic minority groups may be more likely to be issued with Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) under these Regulations. The Government has been clear that police enforcement of these Regulations must be proportionate and fair. Enforcement that is perceived to be unfair or heavy handed could damage relationships with people who have those protected characteristics. This has the potential to undermine the social distancing measures more broadly. This is why police guidance has been clear that enforcement should be the last resort. The police are expected to follow the principles under policing by consent to work, engage, explain, encourage and then enforce. We will continue to work closely with the police to track community impacts and associated risks.
217. The Home Office will continue to regularly liaise with police forces, who will report back on community reactions.

Religion or belief

218. We have not identified any impacts for this group regarding enforcement of the regulations, under any of the PSED limbs.

Sex

219. We have identified impacts under limbs 1 and 3 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limb 2.
220. As with offending in general, the large majority (around 8 in 10) of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) were issued to men.
221. As we see in the data, men are more likely to be issued with FPNs under these Regulations. Although this broadly reflects wider patterns of offending, the Government has been clear that police enforcement of these Regulations must be proportionate and fair. Enforcement that is perceived to be unfair or heavy handed could damage relationships with people with those protected characteristics. This has the potential to undermine the social distancing measures more broadly. Therefore, police guidance has been clear that enforcement should be the last resort. The police are expected to follow the principles under policing by consent, to work to

engage, explain, encourage and then enforce. We will continue to work closely with the police to track community impacts and associated risks.

Sexual orientation

222. We have not identified any impacts for this group regarding enforcement of the regulations, under any of the PSED limbs.

Lower socio-economic groups

223. The increase in FPN amount is likely to have an impact on lower socio-economic groups who will less easily be able to pay the fine. This could result in certain groups being overrepresented in the amount of people who have been prosecuted for failure to pay the FPN. At present, the data released regularly on FPN distribution does not cover socio-economic class. However, the Government is working with the police to obtain the record-level data, which will enable them to track community impacts and associated risks.

Closing Schools

As part of the country's response to coronavirus the SoS for Education asked all childcare providers, schools and other educational settings to restrict access to the majority of pupils from Friday 20 March 2020- asking that until further notice they should only allow children of critical workers or vulnerable children and young people to attend. This request covered childcare providers, primary and secondary schools and further education colleges (including state-funded and independent schools). On 13 May, the government announced that a decision will be made on 29 May about a phased return to school, college and childcare for children and young people in key transition years, alongside those already attending, from 1 June, under Step 2 of the roadmap to lift restrictions. Primary schools in England will be able to welcome back nursery, reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children, in smaller class sizes. Nurseries and other early years providers, including childminders, will be able to begin welcoming back children of all ages. Secondary schools and colleges will be able to provide some face-to-face support for Year 10, Year 12, and 16-19 college students who are due to take key exams and assessments next year. Specialist settings should prioritise children and young people approaching transitions or those particularly needing in-person education to support their life chances and development, rather than specific year groups. To protect children and young people who are clinically extremely vulnerable or may be shielding, parents and carers will not be fined for non-attendance at this time. Clinically extremely vulnerable teachers and staff should not attend work, and clinically vulnerable individuals should be supported to work from home where possible, and if not, offered the safest available on-site roles.

Age

224. We have identified impacts under limb 2 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 1 and 3.

Children

225. It should be noted that the PSED, so far as relating to age, does not apply to the exercise of a function relating to the provision of education, benefits, facilities or services to pupils in schools (along with some other exceptions relating to children's accommodation) but it does apply to wider impacts of age relating to schools, and it will also apply in relation to Further Education settings and early years settings which are not situated in schools. For completeness, we have covered it for pupils in schools also.
226. The need to control the risk of transmission and operate within smaller groups and class sizes means only a limited number of pupils could be allowed to return to school in the first instance. This means certain year groups had to be prioritised for wider opening at the cost of others.
227. Recent scientific advice¹²⁸ published by the department highlighted that the levels of infection of and transmission by children is not fully understood: this is a novel virus and the scientific understanding is developing all the time. However, the current evidence is that:
- a. There is a high degree of confidence¹²⁹ that the **severity of disease** in children is lower than in adults.
 - b. There is a moderate to high degree of confidence that the **susceptibility to clinical disease** of younger children (up to age 11-13) is lower than for adults. For older children there is not enough evidence yet to determine whether susceptibility to disease is different to adults.
 - c. The susceptibility to **infection** of younger children (up to age 11-13) might be lower than for adults, but the degree of confidence in this is low. For older children there is not enough evidence yet to determine whether susceptibility to infection is different to adults.
 - d. There is no evidence to suggest that children **transmit the virus** any more than adults. Some studies suggest younger children may transmit less, but this evidence is mixed and provides a low degree of confidence at best.
228. Schools and other educational settings have been encouraged to provide educational support for pupils at home and where possible for parents and carers to

¹²⁸ Overview of scientific advice and information on coronavirus (COVID-19): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/885631/Overview_of_scientific_advice_and_information_on_coronavirus_COVID19.pdf

¹²⁹ The language used here reflects that in the advice given to us, for the purposes of consistency.

assist with that to minimise impacts. However, there is likely to be an impact on the education of pupils not attending schools. Strategies to minimise and recover from this issue have been implemented such as:

- a. Schools and educational settings are adapting to new ways of working by moving resources online, working remotely and changing the way they support their students and each other.
 - b. DfE publishing [guidance](#) for parents and carers on how to support their child's education and development at home.
 - c. DfE publishing sources of high quality [online educational resources](#), including the [Oak National Academy](#), including some content for pupils with SEND.
 - d. The government has committed over £100 million to support vulnerable and disadvantaged children in England to access remote education and social care services, including by providing laptops, tablets and 4G wireless routers. We are providing laptops and tablets to vulnerable and disadvantaged young children who would otherwise not have access and are preparing for examination in Year 10, receiving support from a social worker or are a care leaver. Where care leavers, children with a social worker at secondary school and disadvantaged children in Year 10 do not have internet connections, we are providing 4G wireless routers.¹³⁰
 - e. To support disadvantaged households who rely on mobile internet connection, the government is working with the major telecoms companies to help ensure that disadvantaged and vulnerable families can access online educational resources while COVID-19 requires children to learn from home.
 - f. For 16-19-year-olds, colleges, schools or other providers can support those without access to devices or connections through their flexible bursary funding. Where additional funding is needed to provide this support, providers can apply to have their bursary funds topped up to ensure those who need it have access.¹³¹
229. Evidence is consistent on the benefits of early education to children's learning and development, particularly for the most disadvantaged children with a less enriching home environment than their peers.¹³² Attendance at early years provision is not

¹³⁰ Get technology support for children and schools during coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-technology-for-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

¹³¹ Get technology support for children and schools during coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-technology-for-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

¹³² Students' educational and developmental outcomes at age 16 Effective Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education (EPPSE 3-16) Project: (Department for Education, 2014): [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/351496/RR354 - Students educational and developmental outcomes at age 16.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/351496/RR354_-_Students_educational_and_developmental_outcomes_at_age_16.pdf)

compulsory, but the wider opening of early years provision will be of direct educational benefit to the children who do attend.

230. Primary school pupils may find independent learning and engagement with new remote learning methods more difficult compared with older secondary school pupils. A Sutton Trust survey from the start of April found children under 7 were mostly or entirely working under parental supervision, while for those over 10 the majority were working mostly or entirely independently.¹³³ Younger school children are therefore more likely to be educationally positively impacted by a return to school.
231. Whilst it is less likely that younger school children are able to maintain set distances from others and limit contacts independently, there are a range of protective measures which can substantially reduce the risk of transmission in these settings. These are outlined as a hierarchy of controls in protective measures guidance.¹³⁴
232. Children in Reception and Year 1 are at the very beginning of their school career and are mastering the basics, including counting and the fundamentals of reading and writing, and learning to socialise with their peers. Year 6 children are preparing for the transition to secondary school and are therefore likely to benefit from time with their friends and teachers to ensure they are ready.
233. Pupils in Year 10 and 12 should benefit from face-to-face support to supplement their remote education. This is because they are preparing for key examinations next year and are most at risk of falling behind due to time out of school or college or, for Year 11s in Alternative Provision, are at risk of not making a successful transition to post-16 and becoming NEET. All pupils serve to benefit educationally from face-to-face provision and therefore for those in years that may not be returning to school from 1 June, there may be an impact on equality of opportunity. However, scientific advice is that a gradual phased increase in the number of children and young people in settings is preferable and therefore other groups have been prioritised at this time.
234. The majority of pupils in Alternative Provision settings are in Years 10 and 11 (66%) and relatively few are in other year groups (only 3% in AP in Year 6).¹³⁵ We are asking AP settings to welcome back Years 10 and 11 (they have no Year 12) to mitigate against the risk of high volumes of pupils failing to achieve a sustained post-16 destination (in 2017/18, 59% had a sustained education or employment

¹³³ COVID-19 Impacts – School Shutdown: <https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/covid-19-and-social-mobility-impact-brief/>

¹³⁴ Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings#personal-protective-equipment-ppe-including-face-coverings-and-face-masks>

¹³⁵ Schools, pupils and their characteristics (Department for Education, June 2019): <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2019>

destination after key stage 4, compared to 94% of pupils in state-funded mainstream schools).¹³⁶

235. There may also be benefits to siblings of children in priority year groups, as they might have more access to one-to-one support from parents and carers with their learning, or greater access to home learning technologies if they no longer have to share.
236. In state-funded schools (mainstream and special), the percentage of pupils in each year group that are vulnerable¹³⁷ is relatively similar from late primary onwards, at around 5% to 6% for Year 6 up to Year 11. The percentage of Year 12 pupils in state-funded schools alone that are vulnerable is lower, however when looking across schools and FE providers, the figure is again around 6%. In reception and Year 1, the figures are slightly lower, at around 4%.¹³⁸
237. Levels of vulnerability are higher in Alternative Provision settings than in mainstream schools. In a given year, around 25% of pupils in all forms of AP and PRUs receive statutory children's social care services.¹³⁹ 81% of pupils state-funded AP are SEN compared to 15% of pupils in all schools, and 13% have an EHC plan compared to 4% of pupils in all schools.¹⁴⁰
238. Given these vulnerable pupils have been able to continue attending their school or educational settings, whilst they have been positively impacted by the continuing offer of education, they have been at an increased risk of exposure to the infection, and this risk will be further increased with more children returning to schools. To help mitigate the remaining risk, the DfE has published guidance on protective measures to help educational settings support safe provision for these children and young people.¹⁴¹
239. Not all vulnerable children who could still attend school are doing so. Regional action teams are working to increase school attendance by vulnerable children, and

¹³⁶ Destinations of KS4 and 16 to 18 (KS5) students: 2018 (Department for Education, October 2019): <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/destinations-of-ks4-and-16-to-18-ks5-students-2018>

¹³⁷ Further information on vulnerable children and young people can be found [here](#)

¹³⁸ DfE analysis of school census and Individualised Learner Record (ILR) (unpublished)

¹³⁹ Children in need of help and protection: data and analysis (Department for Education, March 2018): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-in-need-of-help-and-protection-data-and-analysis>

¹⁴⁰ Special educational needs in England (Department for Education, July 2019): <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england-january-2019>

¹⁴¹ Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings#personal-protective-equipment-ppe-including-face-coverings-and-face-masks>

according to DfE data,¹⁴² 73,000 of the children in attendance on Thursday 14 May 2020 were classed by schools as vulnerable, and we estimate this represents less than 20% of all children and young people classified as children in need or who have an EHCP.¹⁴³

240. We have made clear that vulnerable children of all year groups continue to be expected and encouraged to attend educational provision where it is appropriate for them to do so. Pupils of ages where there are relatively fewer vulnerable children are therefore more likely to be affected by wider opening in terms of being able to return to school. Vulnerable pupils may also see benefits of the wider opening, as attendance is normalised, and they are more likely to attend school.
241. Many older pupils in Year 11 and Year 13 were preparing to sit examinations and other vocational assessments. These assessments have been cancelled, which could disadvantage this age cohort in their educational or career progression. However, there is work underway to ensure that those pupils can be given appropriate grades that were expected through a clear and robust process, with an opportunity to sit an examination as soon as reasonably possible when schools and colleges return if pupils feel that their calculated grade does not reflect their ability. Further details of that methodology and the possible impacts on protected characteristics is not considered within this assessment, as this is a matter for which Ofqual, the independent qualifications regulator in England, has responsibility.
242. The policy rationale for our proposed approach in relation to FE is that this cohort of learners is most likely to be in full time education and due to take key examinations next year, and most at risk of falling behind and as a result to suffer from significant negative impact on life chances. We are providing for flexibilities in relation to other older groups of learners for example where students aged 19 or over may be doing the same courses and taught in the same classes as 16-19 learners. We understand that many learners are engaging well with remote learning and may be content not to attend due to ongoing concerns about travel and being in enclosed spaces.
243. There is a risk that, by not applying priority year groups in prioritising children and young people for return to special education settings, we will create potential for disparity in access to education settings for some pupils with SEND, relating to the age of pupils.¹⁴⁴ As an example, DfE will expect a pupil with SEND aged 10 at the start of the academic year in a mainstream setting, to be able to return to school, conferring benefits as set out in this document. We will not be able to be as confident that a pupil with ostensibly similar SEND needs will be able to return to a special education setting, because we are asking and empowering the setting to make judgements on a case-by-case basis. This would negatively impact on a pupil with

¹⁴² Coronavirus (COVID-19): attendance in education and early years settings:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings>

¹⁴³ DfE analysis of school census and children in need census (unpublished)

¹⁴⁴ The relationship between SEN and the protected characteristics of disability is explored further in the [Disability](#) section of this document

SEND in a special education setting, who misses out on a return to learning. It is similarly possible that a pupil with SEND in a mainstream setting, who is not in a priority year group, will miss out where a pupil with similar needs in a specialist setting will have been able to return to education. It is not possible to estimate the number of pupils who could be affected, because decisions will be taken at school level.

244. On balance, we see offering more flexibility to specialist settings as likely to have a positive effect, overall. Children in special settings tend to have more complex needs and reach transition points at different times. This requires in turn a more flexible approach to organising 'school years' than in mainstream school settings. The policy goal in mainstream schools is to prioritise for the return of those children approaching transitions, determined in mainstream by their year group. Giving head teachers in specialist settings the flexibility to prioritise children for return on an individual basis, not by year group, will give them the best chance of achieving that same goal. Similarly, hospital schools have been given greater flexibility around which students to welcome back in a phased return, based on a risk assessment conducted between education and NHS Trust staff. This will ensure pupils are prioritised appropriately, based on their individual health and educational needs.

Families

245. Based on the 2011 census, we assume that unless there has been a significant change since this point in time, a large proportion of parents and carers with youngest dependent children of primary school age or below are under 50 years old and are therefore not in the most vulnerable age categories¹⁴⁵ (individuals above 70 are considered clinically vulnerable based on their age¹⁴⁶).
246. However, a larger proportion of parents and carers whose youngest child is age 10 or above are themselves 65 or above. Therefore, wider opening of secondary schools and colleges could increase the risk for older generations. For households with multiple generations living together, children and young people returning to childcare, schools and other educational settings could increase the risk for older generations and those vulnerable for reasons other than age in the household.
247. This age profile does mean most parents and carers will be of working age¹⁴⁷ and so are more likely to be positively impacted by some form of wider opening of childcare, schools and other educational settings in terms of their ability to work and their incomes and livelihoods. In particular younger parents and carers, who are more likely to be parents and carers of children in early years and primary, are most likely to be positively impacted in terms of ability to go back to work.

¹⁴⁵ 2011 Census data: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census/2011censusdata>

¹⁴⁶ Staying alert and safe (social distancing): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

¹⁴⁷ 2011 Census data: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census/2011censusdata>

248. There may also be benefits for older grandparents and carers who may, against government advice, have been drawn into providing childcare to enable a parent or carer to go to work, despite being in a high-risk group. The wider opening of schools may reduce or eliminate contact with children for these individuals, which may lower their risk of infection.

Workforce in childcare, schools and other educational settings

249. Public Health England states that coronavirus can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.¹⁴⁸ There is a risk that face-to-face contact increases the risk of contracting the virus within the protected characteristics of age.
250. The childcare, school and other educational workforce generally skews to the younger end of the age scale for working age adults^{149 150}, and therefore most individuals are not in the vulnerable age categories, meaning that an impact on the health of the childcare and teaching workforce due to their age alone is likely to be limited.
251. The AP workforce tends to be older than in mainstream; in 2018 6.3% of AP teachers were aged 60 and over, compared to 1.9% in primary and 2% in secondary.¹⁵¹
252. Around a quarter of the childcare workforce is aged over 50¹⁵², and a return to work may present a higher risk for some of the older individuals in this group, if they are over 70. For young children (or those with additional support needs), more unavoidable intimate care may be needed (nappy changing, wiping noses, cleaning bodily fluids, lifting etc). Guidance sets out cases where Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should be used in providing care.¹⁵³ Some studies suggest younger children may transmit less, but this evidence is mixed and provides a low degree of confidence at best.
253. School leaders are more likely to be older than classroom teachers, and therefore may be more at risk based on their age alone. In nursery and primary schools, 29%

¹⁴⁸ Coronavirus (COVID-19) – what you need to know:

<https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/>

¹⁴⁹ The early years workforce in England: https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/The-early-years-workforce-in-England_EPI.pdf

¹⁵⁰ School workforce in England: November 2018 (Department for Education, June 2019): <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2018>

¹⁵¹ DfE analysis of school workforce census (unpublished)

¹⁵² The early years workforce in England: https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/The-early-years-workforce-in-England_EPI.pdf

¹⁵³ Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings#personal-protective-equipment-ppe-including-face-coverings-and-face-masks>

of school leaders are over 50 compared to 14% of classroom teachers. In secondary schools, the figures are 23% and 16% for school leaders and classroom teachers respectively.¹⁵⁴ In some settings, leaders may be less likely than teachers to come into direct contact with children and young people who can't observe social distancing, however this may not be universally true across settings.

254. We do expect that other workforce in schools, such as teaching assistants and catering staff, may have an older age profile and so those staff may be more at risk from a return to school. In some of these roles, contact with children may be more limited. Staff working in hospital schools may be working in the same premises where COVID-19 positive patients are being treated, and so their working environment is riskier. We expect headteachers to conduct risk assessments on staffing, and staff should also wear PPE if needed.
255. We continue to provide clear guidance about the groups who should be shielding and therefore not attending school.¹⁵⁵ Staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend work and those who are clinically vulnerable should be found roles where they can work from home, such as leading remote learning, and if this is not possible should be found the safest on-site roles available. The same applies in early years and childcare settings that have equivalent roles.
256. We are aware that shortfalls in staffing may lead to pressure on staff to take up roles with greater risk or attend work when they are advised not to. Possible approaches to managing a shortfall in staff for primary schools have been outlined in a planning guide¹⁵⁶ and should help to mitigate this risk.
257. 26% of college staff are aged 55 or older compared with 8% of school staff, therefore there may be more staff in colleges who are clinically vulnerable due to their age^{157, 158} However, only individuals over 70 are vulnerable due to their age, and so this will only apply to a certain fraction of those 55 or older. Older children in FE settings may also be more able to adhere to social distancing guidelines.

¹⁵⁴ School workforce in England: November 2018 (Department for Education, June 2019): <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2018>

¹⁵⁵ Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings#Shielded-and-clinically-vulnerable-adults>

¹⁵⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools>

¹⁵⁷ School workforce in England: November 2018 (Department for Education, June 2019): <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2018>

¹⁵⁸ College staff survey (Department for Education, 2018): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/college-staff-survey-2018>

Disability

258. We have identified impacts under limbs 2 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limb 1 or 3.

Children

259. Special educational needs (SEN) and disability are not synonymous, but there is an overlap between them, as around half of pupils with SEN also have a disability.¹⁵⁹
260. 14.9% of school pupils have SEND and 3.1% have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Pupils with an EHCP were defined as vulnerable by DfE at the point schools were asked to allow attendance to certain categories of pupils on 23 March, with local authorities and schools asked to carry out a risk assessment to determine whether or not each pupil with an EHCP should continue to attend school. We have also confirmed that local authorities and schools have the flexibility to make a risk assessment, and having done so, to consider pupils with SEND who do not have an EHCP to be 'vulnerable', based on their knowledge of the pupil's needs.¹⁶⁰
261. There is a risk arising for children with EHCPs in priority years, in mainstream or Alternative Provision settings. For this group, which we estimate consists of around 30,000 pupils,¹⁶¹ attendance will also depend on the risk assessment determining that it remains as safe or safer for them to be in the setting than at home. This is a policy with positive intent. It aims to maximise the benefit of education for this group of children and young people with SEND by ensuring they are able to return to settings with their peers; academic, social and emotional benefits as well as providing a form of respite to families. It minimises the risk that this group of children and young people with SEND will return to a setting when it is not safe for them to do so. The risk is that as head teachers consider how to keep these and other children and young people safe, they conclude that the increase in numbers of pupils attending the setting makes attendance unsafe (or less safe) for a pupil with an EHCP. This could, for example, be the case where a pupil's behaviour makes it hard to maintain protective measures.¹⁶²
262. We cannot predict accurately the likelihood of this risk becoming a live issue, nor how many of the cohort it might affect. The data we have on attendance for vulnerable children suggests that 73,000 of the children in attendance on Thursday

¹⁵⁹ Disability Data Collection for Children's Services: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/research/pdes/DCSF-RR062.pdf>

¹⁶⁰ Further information on vulnerable children and young people can be found [here](#)

¹⁶¹ Schools, pupils and their characteristics - January 2019: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2019>

¹⁶² Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

14 May 2020 were classed by schools as vulnerable¹⁶³, and we estimate this represents less than 20% of all children and young people classified as children in need or who have an EHCP.¹⁶⁴ If we assume that for pupils with an EHCP this figure is in accordance with a risk assessment that judged them safer at home, we would need evidence to suggest schools and local authorities are likely to downgrade their assessments of risk, to be confident that this new risk will not play out, potentially at scale.

263. We have issued and are updating guidance on risk assessment, and more generally we are supporting children and young people with SEND to help education providers and others take these difficult decisions. We are also developing the offer of online learning and encouraging and supporting education settings and local services to do more to help children and young people who remain at home. We are and will continue to monitor attendance of children and young people with EHCPs, so will be able to respond if numbers suggest this risk has become an issue.
264. Those who have been assessed as able to attend school but have not done so through fear and stigma, may be encouraged to return to school by seeing other pupils returning and through changes to the government's messaging on remaining at home, providing a positive impact on their education and wellbeing. Some of those who were judged at risk and therefore not attending school may be reassessed as the position changes and it may be determined that they can now attend, providing a positive impact. Some of those who were judged at risk and therefore not attending school will continue not to attend, but it is likely that these pupils' education will suffer more as a result in comparison to peers who do return, creating or widening the gap in attainment between pupils. However, to mitigate against this, many schools (including special schools) are offering online or virtual learning. Further, DfE has published sources of high quality [online educational resources](#), while the [Oak National Academy](#) is now providing content designed for pupils with SEND.
265. Some disabled pupils will find it harder or impossible to maintain social distancing at school and transport may be required that cannot be provided in a way that allows for social distancing. This will either put these pupils at greater risk, or act as a disincentive for them attending school, thus negatively impacting their education compared with their peers. We have been clear that for children and young people with SEND, it will be especially important to teach new norms and routines around protective measures and personal hygiene clearly and accessibly. We have also said that reasonable adjustments should be applied to new rules where appropriate, for example for children and young people with SEND.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³ Coronavirus (COVID-19): attendance in education and early years settings: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings>

¹⁶⁴ DfE analysis of school census and children in need census (unpublished)

¹⁶⁵ Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/COVID-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing#behaviour-and-exclusions>

266. 6.3% of three- and four-year-olds benefitting from funded early education have SEN¹⁶⁶. Early education also helps with the early identification of additional needs, which might otherwise be missed, or not identified until a child starts school. Children with SEND have been able to access childcare during the period of closure of schools to most pupils, but actual take up levels are unclear. It is also unclear whether parents and carers will be confident enough about the safety of childcare to send children from vulnerable groups back in.
267. 23.4% of FE learners aged 16-18 reported a learning difficulty and/or disability (LLDD) in 2019/20, with 22.7% of 16-year olds reported as LLDD. These are higher percentages than the percentage of pupils with SEND in schools. The proportion of pupils with an EHCP is also higher in FE settings than in schools, with 3.9% of 16-18-year olds in FE having an EHCP. This varies by provider type; 1.0% of students in Sixth Form colleges have an EHCP, compared to 4.7% in General FE colleges.¹⁶⁷
268. Figures for 2019/20 show that FE learners (across all provider types) aged 19-25 are more likely to have an EHCP than those aged 16-18 (5% compared to 4%). For General FE colleges in particular, 7% of learners aged 19-25 have an EHCP compared to 5% of 16-18-year-old learners.¹⁶⁸
269. 2019 data shows that pupils with special educational needs are more likely to be eligible for free school meals, 28% compared to 13% of pupils without special educational needs. Pupils with an EHCP are more likely to be eligible for free school meals than pupils on SEN support (33% compared to 27%)¹⁶⁹. 13% of FE learners aged 16-18 in 2019/20 with LLDD are eligible for or in receipt of free meals in further education, compared to 7% of those without LLDD. FE learners aged 16-18 with an EHCP are more likely than those without to be eligible for or in receipt of free meals in FE (20% compared to 8%)¹⁷⁰. Pupils who are eligible for free school meals and who are not attending school would also be missing out on that free school meal, but to mitigate this issue support is being provided through their existing schools food suppliers or through the national voucher scheme the government has put in place.
270. Disabled pupils who are eligible for free school meals may have more challenging home working environments¹⁷¹ which are less conducive to home learning and

¹⁶⁶ Education provision: children under 5 years of age, January 2019: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/education-provision-children-under-5-years-of-age-january-2019>

¹⁶⁷ DfE analysis of Individualised Learner Record (ILR)

¹⁶⁸ DfE analysis of Individualised Learner Record (ILR)

¹⁶⁹ Department for Education (2019) 'Special educational needs in England January 2019': <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england-january-2019>

¹⁷⁰ DfE analysis of Individualised Learner Record (ILR)

¹⁷¹ Drivers and Barriers to Educational Success - Evidence from the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (2009): <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/4515>

therefore may be more impacted by the request to allow attendance of only certain categories of pupils. Therefore, to help mitigate this issue:¹⁷²

- a. The Government has committed over £100 million to support vulnerable and disadvantaged children in England to access remote education and social care services, including by providing laptops, tablets and 4G wireless routers.
- b. We are providing laptops and tablets to vulnerable and disadvantaged children who would otherwise not have access and are preparing for examination in Year 10, receiving support from a social worker or are a care leaver. Where care leavers, children with a social worker at secondary school and disadvantaged children in Year 10 do not have internet connections, we are providing 4G wireless routers.¹⁷³
- c. To support disadvantaged households who rely on a mobile internet connection, the Government is working with the major telecoms companies to help ensure that disadvantaged and vulnerable families can access online educational resources while COVID-19 requires children to learn from home.
- d. For 16-19-year-olds, colleges, schools or other providers can support those without access to devices or connections through their flexible bursary funding. Where additional funding is needed to provide this support, providers can apply to have their bursary funds topped up to ensure those who need it have access.¹⁷⁴

271. The prevalence of SEN is higher in children from certain ethnic minority groups (GRT, Black Caribbean).^{175, 176}

272. Children with mental health problems are likely to benefit from the return to school because it may increase their likelihood of being referred to mental health services as well as their engagement in activities beneficial for mental wellbeing such as physical exercise and social contact. Although this should be balanced by the fact that some children might experience anxiety around the risks linked to returning to school whilst the transmission of infections is still prevalent in the population.

Families

273. Parents and carers with disabilities may find it difficult to send their children to childcare or school in a way that supports social distancing. If they are required to

¹⁷² Get technology support for children and schools during coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-technology-for-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

¹⁷³ Get technology support for children and schools during coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-technology-for-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

¹⁷⁴ Get technology support for children and schools during coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-technology-for-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

¹⁷⁵ Department for Education (2019) 'Special educational needs in England January 2019': <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england-january-2019>

¹⁷⁶ Please refer to the [Race \(including ethnicity\)](#) section for an assessment of the impact for this protected characteristic

shield due to their disability, they may particularly feel pressure to send their child to school and in so doing, put themselves at risk. If it is necessary to keep their child at home due to their health, they may suffer further negative impact on their ability to work and their wellbeing without some respite, but this will be outweighed by the benefits of reduced health risks.

274. Guidance is clear that if a child or young person lives with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable and stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to at their school or setting, we do not expect these individuals to attend. We also expect schools to work closely with parents and carers, as they normally would, when agreeing the best approaches for their circumstances.

Workforce in schools and other educational settings

275. The ONS reports that 9% of primary school teachers, 11% of secondary school teachers, 16% of teaching assistants, and 9% of headteachers have a disability.¹⁷⁷ Based on a survey by Teacher Tapp, around 17% of teachers are in a household that they feel needs to isolate, typically to protect a vulnerable household member.¹⁷⁸
276. A higher proportion of the college workforce than in schools reports having a disability, therefore there may be more staff in the COVID-19 vulnerable groups. 15% of college teachers and 14% of college leaders reported having a disability. This is a higher proportion than those reported for primary (9%) and secondary (11%) teachers. A higher proportion of teachers in some subject areas reports having a disability e.g. 21% of social care teachers.¹⁷⁹
277. Those staff may be negatively impacted by any increased opening of schools and the potential risk of virus transmission. There may be an impact on disabled, vulnerable staff who may need particular adjustments to come back to work, or potentially face a prolonged period before they can actually return to work. This inability to return to work on site may have negative impacts on career progression.
278. We have been clear in guidance about which staff should remain at home and which should be prioritised for the safest on-site roles if they cannot work from home; and we expect schools to work through any issues with staff as they normally would; and have flagged the need to communicate with and reassure staff.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ Who works in the public sector? (Office for National Statistics, June 2019):

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/governmentpublicsectorandtaxes/publicspending/articles/whoworksinthepublicsector/2019-06-04>

¹⁷⁸ Who could return to school? (If it were possible): <https://teachertapp.co.uk/who-could-return-to-school-if-it-were-possible/>

¹⁷⁹ College staff survey - 2018: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/college-staff-survey-2018>

¹⁸⁰ Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

279. We would encourage schools to be especially sensitive to the needs and worries of disabled staff, considering if any additional measures or reasonable adjustments may need to be put in place to mitigate concerns. Maintained schools and academies will need to discharge their own equality duties in considering the particular impacts of a wider opening of their settings on disabled staff members. In our published guidance¹⁸¹, we have reminded schools and academies of this by prompting them to consider the impact on staff and pupils with protected characteristics, including race and disability, in developing their approach to wider opening. We have also prompted them to work closely with staff and unions as they normally would, when agreeing the best approaches for their circumstances.
280. Guidance in our primary framework states that it does not supersede any legal obligations relating to health and safety, employment or equalities and it is important employers continue to comply with existing obligations, including those relating to individuals with protected characteristics.¹⁸²

Gender reassignment

281. We have identified impacts under limbs 3 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limb 1 and 2.

Children

282. There is very little data about transgender children in primary settings, and so it is unclear what impact return to school will have on these children in particular. If there are any negative impacts of lockdown on young transgender children, it is possible that the return to time with peers and self-expression through play, could be beneficial.
283. LGBT children and young people may experience specific difficulties in the home environment relating to their gender identity, without the 'escape' of going to educational settings. The National LGBT Survey 2017, which does not include those aged under 16-years, found that 48% of transgender respondents had experienced a negative incident due to being LGBT or being thought to be LGBT involving someone that they lived with in the 12 months leading up to the survey. The most frequently identified perpetrators of the most serious incident were parents and guardians (38%).¹⁸³

¹⁸¹ Opening schools for more children and young people: initial planning framework for schools in England : <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/opening-schools-for-more-children-and-young-people-initial-planning-framework-for-schools-in-england>

¹⁸² Planning guide for primary schools: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools>

¹⁸³ National LGBT Survey - Research Report (GEO, 2018): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-lgbt-survey-summary-report>

284. In addition, any support, advice and guidance given by school welfare officers to any LGBT pupils and young people will not be easily accessible during the schools limited opening. There are other resources including NSPCC that children and young people can access (from home) to help mitigate some of this issue.

285. If young children have experienced transphobic bullying in school, which has abated due to separation from peers during the period of closure of schools to most pupils, it would be for schools to continue to apply robust policies to protect all children from bullying.

Families

286. We don't anticipate any disproportionate impacts on families subject to the protected characteristics of gender reassignment.

Workforce in schools and other educational settings

287. We do not collect data on the gender reassignment status of staff in schools and other educational settings, however we don't anticipate any disproportionate impacts on staff subject to this protected characteristic.

Pregnancy and maternity

288. We have identified impacts under limb 2 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 1 and 3.

Children

289. Guidance states that clinically extremely vulnerable children and young people, which currently includes pregnant women with significant heart disease, have been advised to shield and therefore aren't expected to attend school or college and should be supported at home as much as possible. These individuals are likely to therefore benefit less than others from the wider opening of schools and other educational settings.

290. Additionally, pregnant women without certain other medical conditions are classed as clinically vulnerable, and therefore may be concerned about the health risk to themselves and may choose to not attend. For those not attending, DfE has implemented a range of strategies to minimise the impact by providing educational support, as outlined earlier in this document.

Families

291. There may be negative impacts on pregnant women with certain medical conditions who are advised to shield as they are in the extremely clinically vulnerable group. Guidance is clear that children and young people living with individuals who are extremely clinically vulnerable are advised to only attend an education or childcare setting if stringent social distancing measures can be adhered to. If they cannot, we do not expect these children and young people to attend. Furthermore, parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time.

292. For pregnant women or mothers of newborns, who may have older children in early years, reception and Year 1, there may be stress from juggling the education and care of young children during the day with needing to deal with their newborn or any pregnancy related issues. The wider opening of childcare and schools may help alleviate this stress, if they choose for their older children to attend, however this will be a personal choice for these women.

Workforce in schools and other educational settings

293. We do not collect data on the pregnancy status of staff in school or other educational settings, however as highlighted elsewhere the workforce is predominantly female.
294. Pregnant members of staff, being a clinically vulnerable group, may need adjustments, or may feel unable to return to work at the same time as their colleagues. This may be particularly pertinent for pregnant BAME members of staff as a recent study found that 56% of pregnant women admitted to hospital with coronavirus from 1 March to 14 April were from a BAME background.¹⁸⁴
295. Guidance states that clinically extremely vulnerable individuals, which currently includes pregnant women with significant heart disease, have been advised to shield and therefore aren't expected to return to work on site. Clinically vulnerable individuals, which includes those who are pregnant, have been advised to take extra care in observing social distancing and should work from home where possible. Education and childcare settings should endeavour to support this, for example by asking staff to support remote education, carry out lesson planning or other roles which can be done from home.¹⁸⁵
296. If clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the safest available on-site roles, staying 2 metres away from others wherever possible, although the individual may choose to take on a role that does not allow for this distance if they prefer to do so. If they have to spend time within 2 metres of other people, settings must carefully assess and discuss with them whether this involves an acceptable level of risk.
297. For individuals facing restrictions in their ability to work, there may be negative impacts on career progression.
298. We would encourage schools to be especially sensitive to the needs and worries of pregnant staff, considering if any additional measures or reasonable adjustments may need to be put in place to mitigate concerns. Maintained schools and academies will need to discharge their own equality duties in considering the particular impacts

¹⁸⁴ Characteristics and outcomes of pregnant women hospitalised with confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection in the UK: a national cohort study using the UK Obstetric Surveillance System (UKOSS): <https://www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/downloads/files/ukoss/annual-reports/UKOSS%20COVID-19%20Paper%20pre-print%20draft%2011-05-20.pdf>

¹⁸⁵ Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-COVID-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-COVID-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

of a wider opening of their settings. In our published guidance¹⁸⁶, we have reminded schools and academies of this by prompting them to consider the impact on staff and pupils with protected characteristics, in developing their approach to wider opening. We have also prompted them to work closely with staff and unions as they normally would, when agreeing the best approaches for their circumstances.

299. Guidance in our primary framework states that it does not supersede any legal obligations relating to health and safety, employment or equalities and it is important employers continue to comply with existing obligations, including those relating to individuals with protected characteristics.¹⁸⁷

Race

300. We have identified impacts under limbs 2 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limb 1 or 3.
301. There is emerging evidence that BAME individuals can be more severely affected than their peers by the virus, though this is not yet fully understood. On 4 May, Public Health England launched a review into the factors affecting health outcomes from COVID-19, to include ethnicity, gender and obesity. This will be published by the end of May and will help to inform our approach.¹⁸⁸ In the meantime, we would encourage schools to be especially sensitive to the needs and worries of BAME pupils, parents and carers, and staff, considering if any additional measures or reasonable adjustments may need to be put in place to mitigate concerns.

Children

302. On balance, pupils from a BAME background are likely to be positively impacted by plans for wider opening from an educational perspective for reasons set out below. However, the policy adopted does not differentiate based on ethnicity.
303. The proportion of pupils who are BAME for most year groups in state-funded mainstream schools is close to the proportion overall across all year groups. This is the case for Reception, Years 1, 6 and 10, however in Years 12 and 13, there are a greater proportion of BAME pupils (27% compared to 24% overall). However, looking across 16-year olds in FE and Year 12 pupils in school, the proportion of white pupils is 74%, the same proportion as in state-funded mainstream schools in year groups prior to key stage 5.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ Opening schools for more children and young people: initial planning framework for schools in England : <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/opening-schools-for-more-children-and-young-people-initial-planning-framework-for-schools-in-england>

¹⁸⁷ Planning guide for primary schools: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools>

¹⁸⁸ Review into factors impacting health outcomes from COVID-19: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/review-into-factors-impacting-health-outcomes-from-COVID-19>

¹⁸⁹ DfE analysis of school census and Individualised Learner Record (ILR)

304. Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils are disproportionately over-represented in AP settings, where the majority of pupils are in year groups that are returning.¹⁹⁰ Chinese and Asian pupils are under-represented in these settings.
305. Certain minority ethnic groups are more likely to be included in the vulnerable children and young people cohort who are still able to attend school: ¹⁹¹ we estimate around 6% of Black or Mixed race pupils are classed as vulnerable compared to 5.2% of White pupils, 3.9% of Asian pupils, 3.1% of Chinese pupils and 4.1% of pupils of other ethnic origins. The proportion of Asian and Chinese pupils classed as vulnerable is constant across age groups, for other BAME ethnicities it increases slightly from Reception to Year 11.¹⁹² Given these vulnerable pupils have been able to continue attending their school or educational settings, whilst they have been positively impacted by the continuing offer of education, they have been at an increased risk of exposure to the infection, and this risk will be further increased with more children returning to schools. To help mitigate the risk, the DfE has published guidance on protective measures to help educational settings support safe provision for these children and young people.¹⁹³
306. However not all children who could still attend school are doing so. Regional action teams are working to increase school attendance by vulnerable children. DfE data¹⁹⁴ show that 73,000 of the children in attendance on Thursday 14 May 2020 were classed by schools as vulnerable, and we estimate this represents less than 20% of all children and young people classified as children in need or who have an EHCP¹⁹⁵. However, this still suggests the vast majority of vulnerable children are not currently at school.
307. We have made clear that vulnerable children of all year groups continue to be expected and encouraged to attend educational provision where it is appropriate for them to do so. Ethnicities with relatively fewer vulnerable children are more likely to be affected by wider school opening in terms of being able to return to school. Vulnerable pupils may also see benefits of the wider opening, as attendance is normalised, and they are more likely to attend school.

¹⁹⁰ Schools, pupils and their characteristics (Department for Education, June 2019): <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2019>

¹⁹¹ Further information on vulnerable children and young people can be found [here](#)

¹⁹² DfE analysis of school census and Individualised Learner Record (ILR)

¹⁹³ Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings#personal-protective-equipment-ppe-including-face-coverings-and-face-masks>

¹⁹⁴ Coronavirus (COVID-19) attendance in education and early years settings in England – summary of returns to 7 May 2020: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/884520/Coronavirus_COVID-19_attendance_in_education_and_early_years_settings_in_England_summary_of_returns_to_7_May_2020.pdf

¹⁹⁵ Estimate based on internal analysis of children in need census (unpublished)

308. There is a group of adolescents who are not currently in school, who are vulnerable to extra familial harm or are already being exploited by criminal gangs. We also know that some groups, such as boys and those from BAME backgrounds are more at risk of exposure to extra-familial harms like county lines and serious violence – males represented 91% of those associated with county lines offending in 2018;¹⁹⁶ in 2019 almost half of Black homicide victims were aged between 16 to 24 years old¹⁹⁷ and self-reported violence and weapons carrying peaks at age 15.¹⁹⁸ As other measures ease, this group is likely to experience decreased supervision and structure alongside increased freedom of movement which could significantly increase their risk of exposure to extra-familial harms. Many professionals are concerned about the spike in serious violent crime that may occur. Widening school opening will benefit this group of young people by improving the protective factor of education.
309. Some ethnic groups are over-represented in disadvantaged populations and we have evidence to show that disadvantaged children have more to gain from early education due to having a less enriching home environment than their peers¹⁹⁹. The wider opening of early years providers will therefore be of particular benefit to these groups, providing they do take up places; as mentioned elsewhere, it is not compulsory.
310. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has suggested that ‘the attainment gap will almost certainly widen when children are not in school’.²⁰⁰ There is a connection between ethnicity, disadvantage and attainment: in 2007 almost half of all children from ethnic minorities were in income poverty.²⁰¹ This may mean these ethnic minority groups are likely to have been more affected by the school closures policy. As noted above, DfE has introduced policies to help support these children and young people.

¹⁹⁶ Count Lines Drug Supply, Vulnerability and Harm 2018 (NCA, 2019):

<https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/who-we-are/publications/257-county-lines-drug-supply-vulnerability-and-harm-2018/file>

¹⁹⁷ Homicide in England and Wales: year ending March 2019 (ONS, 2020):

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/homicideinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2019>

¹⁹⁸ Serious Violence Strategy (HM Government, 2018):

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/698009/serious-violence-strategy.pdf

¹⁹⁹ Students' educational and developmental outcomes at age 16 Effective Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education (EPPSE 3-16) Project:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/351496/RR354 - Students educational and developmental outcomes at age 16.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/351496/RR354_-_Students_educational_and_developmental_outcomes_at_age_16.pdf)

²⁰⁰ Chief Executive's Letter: School closures (EEF, 2020):

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/chief-executives-letter-school-closures-the-disadvantage-gap-may-widen-but-there-are-practical-steps-we-can-take-to-minimise-it>

²⁰¹ Poverty among ethnic groups: How and why does it differ? (New Policy Institute, 2007):

<https://www.npi.org.uk/publications/income-and-poverty/poverty-among-ethnic-groups-how-and-why-does-it-differ/>

311. Exploration of the home learning environment for different ethnic groups using internal findings from the LSYPE²⁰² also suggest that pupils from particular ethnic backgrounds may be more impacted by this school closure policy. These survey findings suggest that:
- a. Young people of mixed ethnic origin (90% had access), Caribbean (91%) and White British (92%) ethnicities were least likely to have access to an internet enabled desktop or laptop. In comparison, 99% young people of Indian ethnicity and 97% of Bangladeshi ethnicity had access to a desktop/laptop.
 - b. Young people from Indian, Pakistani and Caribbean ethnic groups were more likely to report that someone at home checked they did their homework 'every time' (51%, 51% and 46% respectively) compared to White British young people (38%). White 'other' (37%) and young people of mixed ethnic origin (38%) were least likely to report that someone at home checked they did their homework 'every time'.
312. This means that the children and young people for the ethnic groups identified above may be less able to do online learning or have encouragement from people at home to ensure they complete work given to them. Therefore, they may also benefit disproportionately from the wider opening of schools.
313. In addition, White British households are less likely to be overcrowded than households from other ethnic groups. Around 2% of White British households experienced overcrowding, compared with 30% of Bangladeshi households (the highest percentage).²⁰³ Therefore children and young people from Bangladeshi (and other ethnic minority) households may not have a physical space within their home that is free from distraction and conducive to learning. There may also be a greater risk of transmission in overcrowded households.²⁰⁴
314. The Asian and Black ethnic groups are disproportionately represented in 'other households with dependent children', a category which includes multigenerational households.²⁰⁵ Children in these ethnic groups may therefore be more likely to live with older relatives who are being 'shielded', and so may be less likely to return to school even if eligible.

²⁰² DfE analysis of longitudinal survey of young people in England (LSYPE) - the analysis is based on a representative sample of around 11,000 young people in Year 10 from the LSYPE2 cohort study in 2014 (wave 2 of the study) (unpublished)

²⁰³ Ethnicity facts and figures – overcrowded households: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/housing/housing-conditions/overcrowded-households/latest>

²⁰⁴ Accounting for the Variation in the Confirmed COVID-19 Caseload across England (New Policy Institute, 2020): <https://www.npi.org.uk/publications/housing-and-homelessness/accounting-variation-confirmed-COVID-19-caseload-across-england-analysis-role-multi-generation-households-london-and-time/>

²⁰⁵ Ethnicity facts and figures – families and households: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/demographics/families-and-households/latest>

315. Gypsy, Roma & Traveller (GRT) pupils have the lowest GCSE results²⁰⁶ of any ethnic group and the highest overall absence rates and persistence rates of any ethnic group.²⁰⁷ Many are unlikely to have access to online lessons and those with parents and carers with low levels of education may have had limited parental support for education at home.
316. During the period of closure of schools to most pupils, school activity to prevent bullying and tackle discriminatory behaviours would be suspended. There is also a risk that bullying may disproportionately affect children of Chinese or other East Asian origin due to discrimination and misconceptions relating to coronavirus. We understand this may have been a trend already, before schools and settings moved to limited opening.
317. For those returning to school, they might be at risk of exposure to COVID-19 when using public transport for their journey. For BAME individuals, on average a higher percentage of trips are made by public transport (in particular by bus),²⁰⁸ suggesting they may be more at risk. There would need to be adequate transport arrangements, in terms of volume of public transport, and safety measures, to ensure children and their families are kept safe when they return to school.
318. Wider opening may benefit young children who live in a household where someone is experiencing abuse. Between April 2018 and March 2019, 5.7% of people aged 16 to 74 in England and Wales reported having been a victim of domestic abuse in the last 12 months. People of Mixed ethnicity (12.9%) were more likely to have experienced domestic abuse than White (5.6%) or Asian people (3.8%).²⁰⁹ With wider attendance of childcare, schools and other educational settings, children are likely to spend more time removed from that abuse, and someone being abused may have increased social contact if they accompany the child to school or are able to return to work during school hours. If a child is being abused rather than someone in their household, they will benefit from the return to school both to get away from the abusive environment, and there is a greater chance the child can report the abuse, or an adult can spot any signs of abuse and report it.

Families

319. Parents and carers of children from particular ethnic backgrounds are less likely to use formal early years provision – ‘White British’, ‘White and Black’ and ‘White and

²⁰⁶ Key stage 4 performance 2019 (revised): <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/key-stage-4-performance-2019-revised>

²⁰⁷ Pupil absence in schools in England: 2018 to 2019: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england-2018-to-2019>

²⁰⁸ Ethnicity facts and figures – travel by distance, trips, type of transport and purpose: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/culture-and-community/transport/travel-by-distance-trips-type-of-transport-and-purpose/latest#number-of-trips-per-person-by-ethnicity-and-mode-of-transport>

²⁰⁹ Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2019: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusevictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2019>

Asian' groups were more likely to use formal childcare (68%, 67% and 69% respectively) compared to 'Asian Bangladeshi' and 'Asian other' ethnic groups (43% and 44% respectively) who were least likely.²¹⁰ So those ethnic groups that are more likely to use formal childcare may have been more affected by the request to limit attendance, and may benefit more from wider opening.

320. The emerging evidence that BAME individuals may be at greater risk from the virus and so any widening of attendance may have a larger negative impact on these individuals if children bring the virus home. Parents and carers of BAME children may be less likely to send their children to childcare, school and educational settings due to this emerging evidence, meaning children may miss out on the benefits set out above.

Workforce in schools and other educational settings

321. In the 2018 Annual Population Survey, 13% of the working age population in employment were an ethnicity other than White.²¹¹ In the 2018 Labour Force Survey, 13% of childcare workers were an ethnicity other than White.²¹²
322. Based on the school workforce census, 9% of classroom teachers, 6% of deputies and assistant heads and 4% of Heads came from BAME backgrounds in November 2018. 11% of non-teaching staff were from a BAME background in November 2018. This was 12% for auxiliary staff and 11% for both teaching assistants and other support staff.²¹³
323. In 2018, 87% of teachers in FE colleges were White, and 6% were from a BAME background (2% other, 5% prefer not to say). 91% of leaders were White, with 4% coming from a BAME background (2% other, 3% prefer not to say).²¹⁴
324. Although care should be taken due to the different sources, these figures suggest BAME staff are proportionately represented in the childcare workforce and among FE teachers, are slightly under-represented in the school workforce and in FE leaders. Therefore, relatively fewer BAME individuals may return to work as part of the wider opening of school and educational settings, and as highlighted above there is emerging evidence that on an individual basis, they may be at greater risk from the virus.

²¹⁰ Childcare and early years survey of parents - 2019:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/childcare-and-early-years-survey-of-parents-2019>

²¹¹ Ethnicity facts and figures – employment: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/work-pay-and-benefits/employment/employment/latest>

²¹² The early years workforce in England: https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/The-early-years-workforce-in-England_EPI.pdf

²¹³ School workforce in England: November 2018 (Department for Education, June 2019): <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2018>

²¹⁴ College staff survey (Department for Education, 2018): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/college-staff-survey-2018>

325. We would encourage schools to be especially sensitive to the needs and worries of BAME staff, considering if any additional measures or reasonable adjustments may need to be put in place to mitigate concerns. Maintained schools and academies will need to discharge their own equality duties in considering the particular impacts of a wider opening of their settings on BAME staff members. In our published guidance²¹⁵, we have reminded schools and academies of this by prompting them to consider the impact on staff and pupils with protected characteristics, including race and disability, in developing their approach to wider opening. We have also prompted them to work closely with staff and unions as they normally would, when agreeing the best approaches for their circumstances.
326. Guidance in our primary framework states that it does not supersede any legal obligations relating to health and safety, employment or equalities and it is important employers continue to comply with existing obligations, including those relating to individuals with protected characteristics.²¹⁶

Religion and belief

327. We have identified impacts under limb 2 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 1 and 3.

Children

328. Previous restrictions on attendance include faith schools, meaning that some groups may be missing out more than just educational provision. However, all pupils are subject to impacts on their social, moral and cultural development, for which schools play an important role.
329. As the wider opening policy again applies irrespective of whether a setting is a faith school or not, we do not anticipate that there are significant equalities impacts for children with this protected characteristic. We have explored some of the potential differential impacts, based on the number of pupils attending settings of different faiths, and some specific considerations regarding studying for certain faiths.
330. Pupils attending faith schools make up different proportions of primary and secondary school pupils (28% of primary school pupils attend a school with a religious character compared to 18% of secondary pupils), however this difference is not the same across all faith groups. Pupils attending a Church of England school make up a greater proportion of primary school pupils than secondary (19% vs 6%) and so with more primary year pupils returning, more of these pupils will be able to

²¹⁵ Opening schools for more children and young people: initial planning framework for schools in England : <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/opening-schools-for-more-children-and-young-people-initial-planning-framework-for-schools-in-england>

²¹⁶ Planning guide for primary schools: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools>

attend their faith schools and enjoy the positive effects of being exposed to their faith in school. Pupils attending a Catholic school make up a similar proportion of primary and secondary pupils (9% vs 10%) so there is less of a disproportionate impact in terms of pupils returning. Though there are a small number of Jewish and Muslim schools, the proportion of pupils attending a Muslim secondary school is over double those at primary with 0.3% compared to 0.1%, Jewish schools make up 0.3% of secondary pupils compared to 0.2% of primary pupils. The choice of priority year groups may therefore limit the ability of Jewish and Muslim schools to support faith education compared to other groups.²¹⁷

331. Jewish and Torah studies for Jewish pupils and Islamic and Koran studies for Muslim pupils often take place in schools, both in normal class time and after school. The current restrictions on school attendance are likely to be affecting this significantly. So wider opening may disproportionately benefit pupils of these religions in priority year groups in terms of access to religious education, although as outlined above more pupils attending schools of these faiths are secondary pupils.

332. Where some children continue to need remote education at home, some religious pupils, such as very orthodox Jewish pupils, are likely to be negatively impacted as they are very unlikely to have internet access to use remote learning options due to their religious beliefs.

Families

333. We don't anticipate any significant disproportionate impacts on families owing to their religion or belief in addition to those outlined for pupils above, but should any arise we would expect schools to consider and manage these locally, working with pupils and parents and carers as they normally do.

Workforce in schools and other educational settings

334. We do not collect data on the religious beliefs of childcare or school staff, however we do not believe there will be disproportionate impacts on staff of different religions and beliefs. Schools will continue to work with staff to address emerging needs and again, we expect schools to consider and manage any disproportionate impact locally.

Sex

335. We have identified impacts under limb 2 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limbs 1 and 3.

Children

336. The ratio of boys to girls at school for most year groups in state-funded mainstream schools is close to the overall gender ratio across all years in these schools, and this is the case for Reception, Years 1, 6 and 10. Year 12 and 13 in schools have a

²¹⁷ DfE analysis of Get Information About Schools (GIAS) data (unpublished)

disproportionate amount of girls (53% of Year 12 and 13 pupils are girls compared to 49% across all years), however 53% of 16-18 year olds in FE are male.²¹⁸ Boys are also over-represented in AP settings relative to mainstream schools, making up 72% of the cohort in PRUs, AP academies, and AP free schools.²¹⁹

337. Boys are more likely to fall into the vulnerable cohort²²⁰ than girls (6.4% compared to 3.8%), and so are more likely to have been eligible to attend school during the period of limited opening.²²¹ Given these vulnerable pupils have been able to continue attending their school or educational settings, whilst they have been positively impacted by the continuing offer of education, they have been at an increased risk of exposure to the infection, and this risk will be further increased with more children returning to schools. To help mitigate the risk, the DfE has published guidance on protective measures to help educational settings support safe provision for these children and young people.²²²
338. Not all vulnerable children who could still attend school are doing so. Regional action teams are working to increase school attendance by vulnerable children, and according to DfE data,²²³ 73,000 of the children in attendance on Thursday 14 May 2020 were classed by schools as vulnerable, and we estimate this represents less than 20% of all children and young people classified as children in need or who have an EHCP.²²⁴ However, this still suggests the vast majority of vulnerable children are not currently at school.
339. We have made clear that vulnerable children of all year groups continue to be expected and encouraged to attend educational provision where it is appropriate for them to do so. Girls are therefore more likely to be affected by wider school opening in terms of being able to return to school. Vulnerable boys may also see benefits of the wider opening, as attendance is normalised, and they are more likely to attend school.
340. There is a group of adolescents who are not currently in school, who are vulnerable to extra familial harm or are already being exploited by criminal gangs. We also know that some groups, such as boys and those from BAME backgrounds are more at risk

²¹⁸ DfE analysis of school census and Individualised Learner Record (ILR) (unpublished)

²¹⁹ Schools, pupils and their characteristics (Department for Education, June 2019):
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2019>

²²⁰ Further information on vulnerable children and young people can be found [here](#)

²²¹ Internal estimate based on analysis of school census (unpublished)

²²² Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings#personal-protective-equipment-ppe-including-face-coverings-and-face-masks>

²²³ Coronavirus (COVID-19): attendance in education and early years settings:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings>

²²⁴ DfE analysis of school census and children in need census (unpublished)

of exposure to extra-familial harms like county lines and serious violence – males represented 91% of those associated with county lines offending in 2018;²²⁵ in 2019 almost half of Black homicide victims were aged between 16 to 24 years old²²⁶ and self-reported violence and weapons carrying peaks at age 15.²²⁷ As other measures ease, this group is likely to experience decreased supervision and structure alongside increased freedom of movement which could significantly increase their risk of exposure to extra-familial harms. Many professionals are concerned about the spike in serious violent crime that may occur. Widening school opening will benefit this group of young people by improving the protective factor of education.

Families

341. Individually men could be at greater risk from the virus: overall, there have been more deaths for males than females.²²⁸ So any widening of attendance may have a larger negative impact on fathers if their children bring home the virus. This risk of unequal impacts is partially offset by the fact that children are less likely to live with fathers than their mothers (86% of lone parent families are lone mothers).²²⁹
342. There are employment benefits from wider opening childcare, schools and other education settings, which may disproportionately benefit parents and carers in single parent or carer families who, as above, are more likely to be mothers. Evidence is also clear that early years provision particularly benefits maternal employment.²³⁰ However, many parents and carers of children in priority year groups will have other children to care for and may not be able to return to work due to this and other factors.

²²⁵ Count Lines Drug Supply, Vulnerability and Harm 2018 (NCA, 2019):

<https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/who-we-are/publications/257-county-lines-drug-supply-vulnerability-and-harm-2018/file>

²²⁶ Homicide in England and Wales: year ending March 2019 (ONS, 2020):

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/homicideinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2019>

²²⁷ Serious Violence Strategy (HM Government, 2018):

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/698009/serious-violence-strategy.pdf

²²⁸ Overview of scientific advice and information on coronavirus (COVID-19):

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/885631/Overview_of_scientific_advice_and_information_on_coronavirus_COVID19.pdf

²²⁹ Families and households in the UK – 2019:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/bulletins/familiesandhouseholds/2019#london-had-the-highest-proportion-of-lone-parent-families-in-the-uk-in-2019>

²³⁰ Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents in England, 2019:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/853358/CEYSP_2019_Report.pdf

343. A further consequence on parents and carers may be due to the uneven split in unpaid work at home.²³¹ According to initial analysis, of those with children who are working from home, women are spending more time on childcare and home schooling than men in the UK.²³² It is therefore likely that, overall, women may look to reduce their work more than men to care for children not in school, and for this particular benefit women may gain proportionately more from the wider opening of schools. This is in part mitigated by critical workers being *able* to still send their children to school, but current data suggests only a small proportion (estimated 5%) of critical workers' children are currently attending school.²³³
344. It's also worth noting that nearly half (46%) of mothers of under-11s report anxiety above a 7 on a scale of 0 - 10, compared with 36% of fathers. This compares with 32% of women and 24% of men who are not parents of young children.²³⁴ This could have long term implications for their mental health, and suggests that future provision of mental health services needs to reflect this. The current focus on mental health and well-being from government departments and the wider public sector is working to mitigate any adverse effects.
345. The return to school for some families will be beneficial for women experiencing domestic abuse who care for young children. There are disproportionate impacts on victims of domestic violence, who are predominantly women, of having to remain at home with their abuser. As of 27 April 2020, calls to the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, run by Refuge, have spiked significantly, seeing an on average increase of around 50% in calls since lockdown measures began.²³⁵ Increased contact with the school and the need to accompany young children to school could provide a reasonable excuse for women to leave the home on the school run, or return to work, and increase their social contact and ability to leave the abusive environment. If a child is being abused rather than someone in their household, they will benefit from the return to school both to get away from the abusive environment, and there is a greater chance the child can report the abuse, or an adult can spot any signs of abuse and report it.

Workforce in childcare, schools and other educational settings

346. Men make up 15% of teachers and leaders in state funded nursery and primary schools, and 37% in secondary schools, making teaching a more female-dominated

²³¹ Women shoulder the responsibility of 'unpaid work':
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/articles/womenshouldtheresponsibilityofunpaidwork/2016-11-10>

²³² Inequality in the impact of the coronavirus shock – evidence from real time surveys:
<https://www.inet.econ.cam.ac.uk/working-paper-pdfs/wp2018.pdf>

²³³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings>

²³⁴ <https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/news/parents-struggling-and-women-keyworkers-are-anxious>

²³⁵ Refuge response to Home Affairs Select Committee report on domestic abuse during Covid-19:
<https://www.refuge.org.uk/refuge-response-to-home-affairs-select-committee-report-on-domestic-abuse-during-covid-19/>

profession.²³⁶ Non-teaching staff are even more predominately female, with 7% of non-teaching staff in primary and nursery settings being male, and 21% in secondary schools. However, school leaders are more likely to be men compared to classroom teachers. In nursery and primary schools, 14% of classroom teachers are male compared to 22% of school leaders. In secondary schools, 36% of classroom teachers are male compared to 50% of school leaders.

347. There are far more women than men in the childcare sector (96% of group-based provider staff are women).²³⁷
348. A gender disparity also shows in the FE workforce. 61% of FE teachers are female and 36% are male (with 3% preferring not to say). For leaders this is 55% female, 44% male (1% prefer not to say).
349. The gender split is also similar in the Alternative Provision workforce; 37% of AP teachers are male and 63% are female.²³⁸
350. Individually men could be at greater risk from the virus: overall, there have been more deaths for males than females.²³⁹ However, on balance the direct risks for women are likely greater given that there are more of them in the childcare, school and other education setting workforce, and women are more likely to work with children in age groups where more intimate care and close contact is required.
351. As school and FE leaders are more likely to be male than teachers in these settings, they may be more at risk than teachers based on their gender alone. In some settings, leaders may be less likely than teachers to come into direct contact with children and young people who can't observe social distancing, however this may not be universally true across settings.
352. Given the make-up of the workforce is predominantly female, job opportunities from wider opening are likely to benefit women more than men, however this is conditional on recovery of the economy from coronavirus.
353. The schools and early years workforce, particularly in primary schools, is predominantly female. As of November 2018 women represented 75% of all state funded classroom teachers in England, 86%²⁴⁰ of teachers in nursery and primary schools, 92%²⁴¹ of teaching assistants, 83% of support staff and 76% of auxiliary

²³⁶ School workforce in England: November 2018 (Department for Education, June 2019): <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2018>

²³⁷ Childcare and early years providers survey: 2019: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/childcare-and-early-years-providers-survey-2019>

²³⁸ DfE analysis of school workforce census (unpublished)

²³⁹ Overview of scientific advice and information on coronavirus (COVID-19): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/885631/Overview_of_scientific_advice_and_information_on_coronavirus_COVID19.pdf

²⁴⁰ School Workforce in England Census, SWFC 2018 Table 4. Note: Full Time Equivalent

²⁴¹ School Workforce in England Census, SWFC 2018 Table 3b

staff.²⁴² Therefore a return for childcare settings, reception, year 1 and year 6 will fall disproportionately on women. Many of the female members of staff also have caring responsibilities for older relatives or clinically vulnerable children who may be vulnerable or shielding, and therefore will be concerned about returning to school.

Sexual orientation

354. We have identified impacts under limbs 3 of the PSED, as set out below. We have not identified any impacts for this protected characteristic under limb 1 and 2.

Children

355. LGBT children and young people may experience specific difficulties in the home environment relating to their sexual orientation, without the 'escape' of going to educational settings. The National LGBT Survey 2017 found that younger respondents were less likely to be open with any of the family they lived with about being LGBT than older respondents (42% of cisgender 16-17 year olds and 28% of 18-24 year olds - in comparison, only 16% of cisgender 35-44 year olds stated the same).²⁴³ However, there is no data for children under 16 years of age.
356. In addition, any support, advice and guidance given by school welfare officers to any lesbian, gay, or bi-sexual pupils and young people will not be easily accessible during the schools limited opening. There are other resources including NSPCC that children and young people can access (from home) to help mitigate some of this issue.
357. There is very little data about sexual orientation of children of primary age, and so it is unclear what impact a return to school will have on these children in particular. Any data we have to draw on about experiences of being LGB are from much older children. If there are any negative impacts of the period of closure of schools to most pupils on young LGB children, it is possible that the return to time with peers and self-expression through play, could be beneficial.
358. If young children have experienced homophobic bullying in school, which has abated due to separation from peers during the period of closure of schools to most pupils, it would be for schools to continue to apply robust policies to protect all children from bullying.

Families

²⁴² Auxiliary staff include those employed in catering and school maintenance

²⁴³ National LGBT Survey - Research Report: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-lgbt-survey-summary-report>

359. We know that there have been increased calls to domestic abuse helplines generally, including by LGB adults that use these services,²⁴⁴ and so children in that environment would benefit from the return to school. We know that the restriction on movement is particularly challenging for those experiencing domestic abuse as it reduces social contact or opportunities to seek support, and so LGB adults may benefit from increased opportunities to leave the home to accompany their child to school or return to work during school hours. If a child is being abused rather than someone in their household, they will benefit from the return to school both to get away from the abusive environment, and there is a greater chance the child can report the abuse, or an adult can spot any signs of abuse and report it.

Workforce in schools and other educational settings

360. We do not collect data on the sexual orientation of staff in schools and other educational settings, however we don't anticipate any disproportionate impacts on staff subject to this protected characteristic.

Self-isolation

361. The requirements to self-isolate for 7 days if presenting symptoms of coronavirus, and to self-isolate for 14 days if a member of the household has presented with symptoms (social distancing measures 1 and 2) were set out in government guidance.

362. Broadly, this will have similar impacts as those described under the restrictions on movement section above. However, self-isolation goes further in that it requires people to stop making use of the reasonable exceptions, for example, exercising and visiting the shops for essential items. In addition to the broad impacts on each of the characteristics outlined above, it is noteworthy that self-isolation will have particular impacts on:

- a. older people, who need access to essential supplies but are more likely to be isolated and unable to call upon others to support them, for example, by delivering essential shopping;
- b. disabled people who have particular needs such as exercising (as noted above). The clarification that disabled people can exercise more than once a day has not explicitly been extended to cover periods of self-isolation. The requirement to self-isolate for 14 days if a household member has symptoms, even if not displaying symptoms themselves, will be particularly difficult for some disabled individuals; and
- c. pregnant women may be particularly impacted if they are unable to access maternity services during their isolation.

²⁴⁴ Refuge response to Home Affairs Select Committee report on domestic abuse during Covid-19: <https://www.refuge.org.uk/refuge-response-to-home-affairs-select-committee-report-on-domestic-abuse-during-covid-19/>

363. Overall these restrictions are time-limited and the benefits of containing the disease are particularly important in these instances, which relate to people displaying symptoms. Therefore the overall impact on these groups is expected to be positive.

Shielding

364. The Government published guidance²⁴⁵ on the shielding of clinically extremely vulnerable individuals on 21 March 2020 and updated on 17 April 2020. There is no obligation on individuals to follow this guidance, but it is strongly recommended that people categorised as clinically extremely vulnerable stay at home at all times and avoid any face-to-face contact for an initial period of 12 weeks, with potential for extension. Visits for essential support are allowed.
365. Of NHS reported COVID-19 hospital deaths, 91% of these were of 60+ year olds, as of 3 May.²⁴⁶ This is in line with the latest ONS weekly release, where 88% of deaths involving COVID-19 were of those aged 65 years and over in the week ending 17 April in England and Wales²⁴⁷. People aged 70 and over are considered clinically vulnerable and have been advised to shield themselves, resulting in these people experiencing a heightened level of social distancing. The government has taken further steps to mitigate the impacts on those shielding, for example, by encouraging them to register for support packages.
366. The government has also implemented mitigation measures, including a registration service for the clinically extremely vulnerable. This allows the government to organise support for access to essential supplies and to specific care needs.
367. Inevitably some shielders will not be able to work from home and it is not feasible for some types of work to be undertaken at home; this could lead to some shielders being furloughed, having reduced hours and/or pay, redundancies etc. Young people, women, disabled people, and ethnic minorities include people who are likely to be vulnerable to income loss and people with lower financial resilience who are likely to be particularly affected. This has been mitigated by the government advising that shielders can be furloughed (as well as those who need to stay home with them); shielders are additionally eligible for SSP (provided they meet the other SSP criteria).
368. Overall, the health impact on these groups, compared with not issuing this guidance, is positive because of the higher fatality rates associated with those categorised as vulnerable. Nonetheless it is important to recognise that there are likely to be significant negative additional impacts that are likely to result from these measures that are not being mitigated. In particular, there will likely be negative impacts to

²⁴⁵ PHE guidance on shielding & protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hPN_tkRsNnCcXLi52lCZ8T_a75aPMXMcKuPHd6tW9M8/edit?ts=5eb033f7

²⁴⁶ NHS England and NHS Improvement (2020) COVID-19 all announced deaths 4 May 2020

²⁴⁷ [ONS Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: week ending 17 April 2020 \(2020\)](#)

physical and mental wellbeing as a result of being limited to the home, and losing access to care and support services accessed elsewhere.

369. Recent research suggests quarantine may have negative psychological effects including post-traumatic stress symptoms, confusion, and anger. Stressors include longer quarantine duration, infection fears, frustration, boredom, inadequate supplies, inadequate information, financial loss, and stigma. The shielding cohort therefore is at increased risk of mental illness compared to the general population as quarantine measures start to relax²⁴⁸.
370. The household bubbling measure being considered may benefit those living alone and shielding, as it would allow them to increase social contact with another household (so long as one of these is single occupancy). However, the shielding requirement would also expand to the second household, which would prevent anyone from e.g. going to work or using public transport; this may make it difficult for shielded individuals to find a suitable bubble partner. On the other hand, where this can be done safely - such as between two shielding households, there would be likely to be significant well-being benefits, especially for those currently living alone. Poll results consistently show that seeing friends and family is what people miss the most.

Opening sports facilities for elite athletes

371. The package for elite sport athletes will be important for this group of people, but will have limited benefits across the population of groups with protected characteristics.
372. Broadcasting professional sport will have a much broader impact across the population. YouGov polling of sports channels indicates that men are more likely to rate sports channels positively (60-63%) than women (37-38%) and that people age 24-40 years give a more positive rating than the over 55s.
373. There is some limited evidence that sport watching can increase levels of domestic abuse. One study found that domestic violence reports to police increase by 38% following football matches in which England lost²⁴⁹. However data is limited and it is difficult to predict the interplay with the social distancing policy. The Government continues to monitor evidence on domestic abuse and is supporting domestic abuse charities and services as explored further below.
374. Sports are a small part of available tv and online media and sport has been more exceptional in its absence than in its return. Those not enjoying sport on tv are likely to find other media options readily available.

²⁴⁸ [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)30460-8/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)30460-8/fulltext)

²⁴⁹ Lancaster University (2013) <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0022427813494843>

Conclusions

375. The social distancing policy and the measures within the Coronavirus Restrictions regulations continue to have a profound impact on the population at large, and disproportionately on groups with protected characteristics. Young people, women, low earners, disabled people and ethnic minority groups are most likely to have been impacted economically by the closure of retail and hospitality sectors. Gender disparities persist without widespread options for school and childcare. There is concern about lasting economic impacts and scarring, especially for young people. There is also evidence of a widening attainment gap between rich and poor children, which may have lasting impacts. Mental health and well-being remains a concern, especially for individuals living alone or vulnerable within their household circumstances - e.g. domestic abuse victims and LGBT young people living with unaccepting families.
376. Measures to improve access to the outdoors and social interaction will have had benefits for many and may have helped young people in particular, and vulnerable individuals to better escape the household environment, although there is limited data available here at this time. The improved access to outdoor space will have had particular benefits for those living in small urban dwellings without access to private outdoor space, which are disproportionately those from ethnic minorities.
377. Moves to open up retail will have some positive impacts for people with protected characteristics and there is evidence that women, disabled people, ethnic minority groups and young people in particular, work in the retail sector.
378. Additional easements to improve social interaction will have further benefits for the population. However, as people increasingly leave their homes and return to something resembling normal life, the differences between the population at large and the generally vulnerable and shielded communities (disproportionately older people and those with underlying health conditions, including disabled people) will become more pronounced, which may further impact the mental well-being of these people. The government's policy to allow limited household bubbling could be an important mitigation to this and will improve circumstances for single-occupancy households in particular, who are more likely to be older individuals.
379. Moves to open up retail and opportunities for social interaction may exacerbate the impacts felt by religious groups, as places of worship remain closed. The government's further consideration of private prayer, weddings and other religious rituals are important mitigations in this respect.
380. Overall, this assessment has identified many indirect equality impacts of the policy and the shielding measures remain directly discriminatory. Nonetheless the health imperative continues to justify the Government's approach and there is good evidence that the Government is adapting its policy and taking measures to mitigate the impacts on groups with protected characteristics where possible and appropriate.

Monitoring and evaluation

381. The Government continues to gather data, including through interactions with stakeholders, to understand the impacts of these measures on all citizens, and in particular groups with protected characteristics. This information is being taken into account as these policies continue to be reviewed. The Government's approach is therefore compliant with the public sector equality duty as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 as this is an ongoing duty.
382. Ministers are prepared to change the Regulations and accompanying guidance when needed to address unanticipated equalities impacts.

The Government is obliged to review the necessity of the measures underpinned in law at least every 21 days, taking into account their effectiveness and impacts of these policies on people with protected characteristics.

ANNEX: ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND EVIDENCE

AGE

Ability to work

Some evidence from a recent survey suggests that younger people were the most likely to be currently furloughed, working on reduced hours or having their employer impose temporary leave, while 65+ were the least likely²⁵⁰:

- 35% aged 18-24
- 31% aged 25-34
- 26% aged 35-44
- 27% aged 45-54
- 17% aged 55-64
- 6% aged 65+

Workers aged 30 years and under were much less likely to work from home than older workers. Younger people may be disproportionately required to physically attend work during lockdown, or be more affected by organisations that are required to close and cannot operate home working. Sales assistant, cashiers and caring personal services are the top jobs in which 22-29 year olds work as of 2017²⁵¹. This reinforces that younger workers may be impacted by an inability to work from home more so than other age groups, as these occupations typically see lower rates of home working.

Percentage of UK workforce to ever work at home by age group, Jan-Dec 2019²⁵²:

- 16-19 = 3%
- 20-24 = just over 10%
- 25-29 = 21%
- 30-34 = 26%
- 35-39 = just under 30%
- 40-44 = 33.5%
- 45-49 = 34%
- 50-54 = 31%
- 55-59 = 28.5%
- 60-64 = 26%
- 65-69 = 33%
- 70 and over = 42%

²⁵⁰ Table 54 <https://britainthinks.com/pdfs/Covid19-Diaries-Data-Tables-April-2020.pdf>

²⁵¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/youngpeoplescareeraspirationsversusreality/2018-09-27>

²⁵² [ONS Coronavirus and homeworking in the UK labour market: 2019](#)

Wellbeing

There are differences in age groups reporting that they are not coping well due to coronavirus, with younger people more likely to report this compared to older adults²⁵³:

- 42% aged 18-24
- 37% aged 25-34
- 30% aged 35-44 and 45-54
- 26% aged 55-64
- 20% 65+

DISABILITY

Access to work

Access to work offers advice and a discretionary grant of up to £60,700 per year to people with a disability or health condition, for support above the level individual can contact an Access to Work Adviser to see if they can average the cost over the whole period of the award that an employer would be required to provide as a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010. The Scheme can be applied to online, by phone, by NGT text relay, British Sign Language video relay service, and through a range of other alternative formats. During the pandemic, Access to Work has taken steps to put in place easements to enable disabled people to work more flexibly, including:

List of easements put in place by Access to Work to enable disabled people to work more flexibly:

- prioritising applications from disabled people who are key workers or have a job to start within 4 weeks ensuring that grant funding is available for the support from day one of their job;
- extending the timeframe to submit claim forms to 9 months;
- working with disabled people and their employers to enable the transfer of specialist equipment from the workplace to the disabled persons home where there are difficulties with the employer doing this;
- accepting employer and support worker signatures via email;
- accepting workplace assessment and Mental Health Support Services delivered via telephony or accessible alternate service;
- accepting claim forms from customers via email who request this as a reasonable adjustment;
- enabling disabled people to adapt their support to meet their requirements in the new environments and barriers they face, for example: changing from British Sign Language face-to-face support to Video Remote Interpreting in order to follow government advice;

²⁵³ Table 1 <https://britainthinks.com/pdfs/Covid19-Diaries-Data-Tables-April-2020.pdf>

- enabling flexibility to the upper limit of Access to Work support during the pandemic by averaging the total package of support over the 3-year award;
- where an employer provides standard equipment, but additional specialist software is required, Access to Work will look to provide funding as appropriate; and
- where support worker support is coming to an end, we are extending customers' awards by 6 months to ensure the disabled person can continue to receive the in-work support they need during the pandemic.

Access to Work service delivery are recording those applications where COVID-19 easements have been applied and we will review these in line with the Cabinet Office guidance as part of the Government's response to COVID-19.

Wellbeing

ONS data regarding Coronavirus and the social impacts on disabled people in Great Britain, published on 24 April²⁵⁴, indicates that:

Nearly 9 in 10 disabled adults (86.3%) said they are very worried or somewhat worried about the effect that the coronavirus (COVID-19) is having on their life. Almost half (45.1%) of disabled adults, compared with around a third (30.2%) of non-disabled adults, reported being very worried about the effect the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is having on their life.

Disabled people are most worried about the effect of COVID-19 has on their ability to make plans, their well-being, and the availability of and access to groceries.

Nearly two-thirds (64.8%) of disabled adults said COVID-19-related concerns were affecting their wellbeing. The main reasons cited by disabled adults for their well-being concerns during the COVID-19 pandemic were feeling worried about the future and being stressed, anxious or bored.

Disabled adults were significantly more likely than non-disabled adults to report spending too much time alone; around a third (35.0%) of disabled adults reported this compared to a fifth (19.9%) of non-disabled adults. Disabled adults are more likely to report having self-isolated because of COVID-19 (52.7%), compared with non-disabled adults (32.3%), is likely to be contributing to these observed trends.

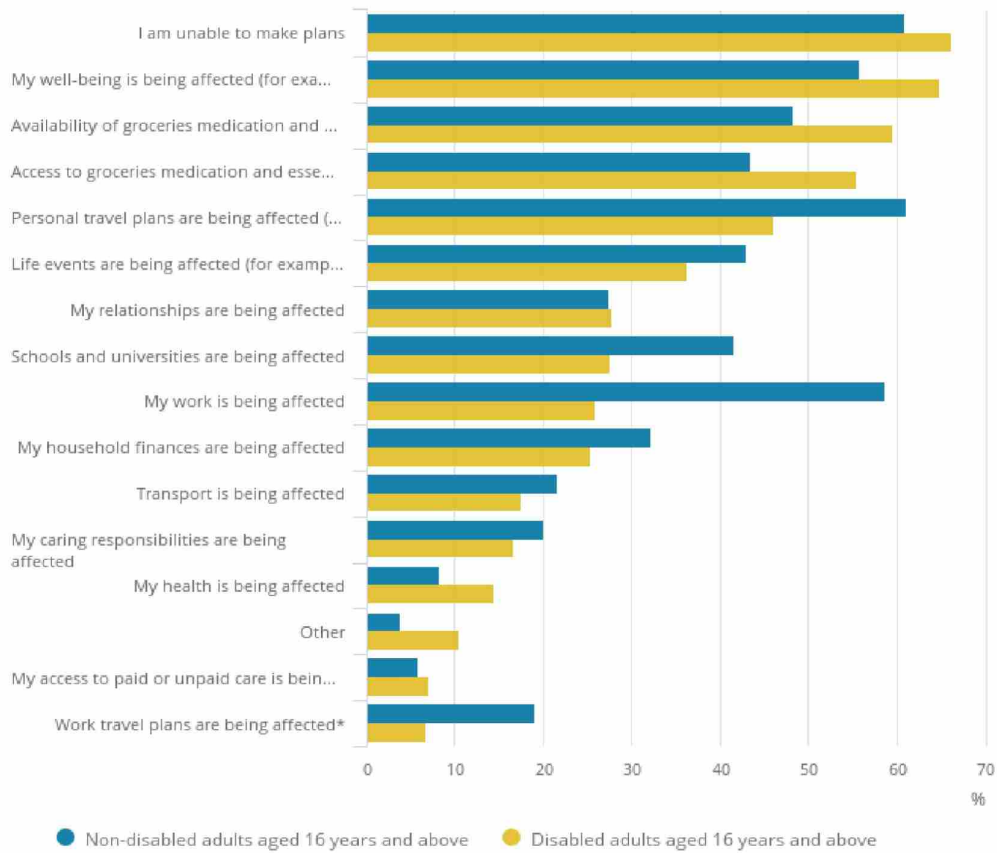
Finding a way to stay in touch with friends and family remotely is the most popular action that is helping people cope while staying at home; however, spending time with members of their household was a less frequent form of coping for disabled (41.9%) than non-disabled adults (63.5%).

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<https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/coronavirusandthesocialimpactsonthosewithadisabilityingreatbritain>

Figure 1: Disabled people are most worried about the effect of COVID-19 on their ability to make plans, their well-being, and the availability of and access to groceries

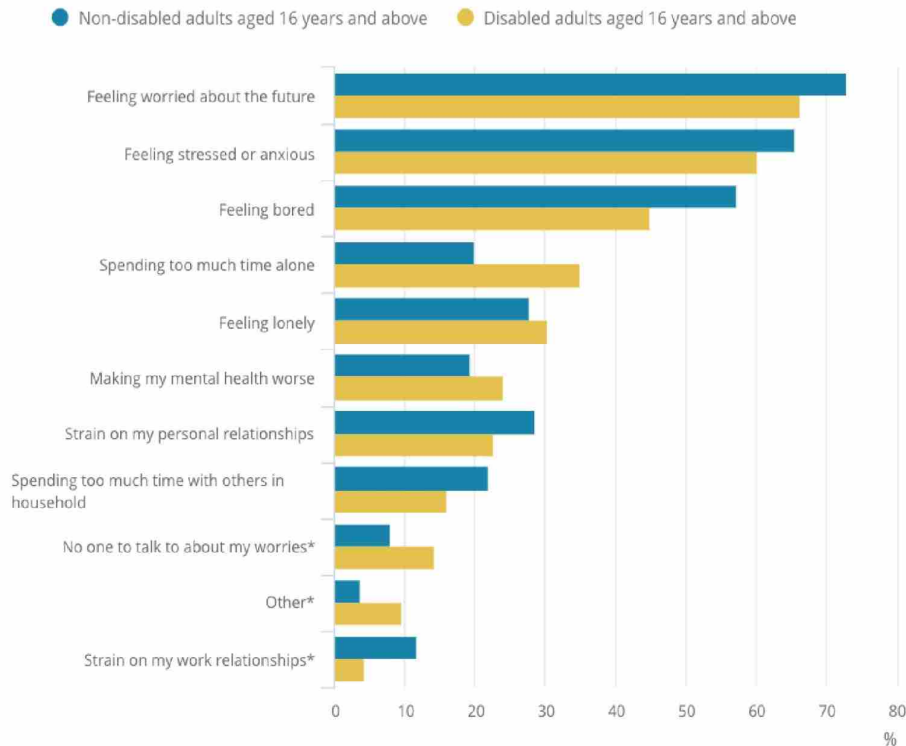
Great Britain, 3 April 2020 to 13 April 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Figure 2: Disabled adults were more likely to report spending too much time alone in the last seven days than non-disabled adults

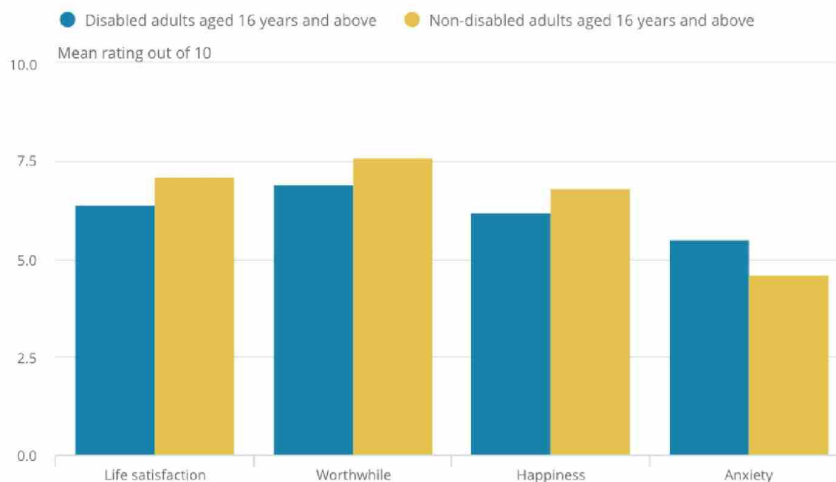
Great Britain, 3 April 2020 to 13 April 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Figure 3: Disabled people report poorer well-being levels than non-disabled people during the coronavirus pandemic

Average well-being ratings for disabled and non-disabled people, Great Britain, 3 April 2020 to 13 April 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Employment

Key statistics on socio-economic position of disabled people

	Disabled people	Non-disabled people
Employment rate (%) ¹	54.1	82.2
% in work:		
Working part time ²	34.2	23.2
Self-employed ³	15.0	14.0
By industrial sector ²		
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	0.7	0.9
Mining, energy and water supply	1.5	1.8
Manufacturing	7.7	9.3
Construction	6.0	7.4
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles	14.4	12.4
Transportation and storage	4.9	4.9
Accommodation and food service activities	5.7	5.5
Information and communication	3.4	4.2
Financial and insurance activities	2.7	4.2
Real estate activities	1.1	1.1
Professional, scientific and technical	5.7	7.8
Administrative and support service	5.5	4.6
Public administration and defence	7.0	6.6
Education	10.6	10.2
Human health and social work activities	16.2	12.8
Arts, entertainment and recreation	2.8	2.6
Other service activities	2.9	2.8
Other activities and unknown	1.1	1.0
All industries	100	100
By occupation ²		
Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	8.8	10.9
Professional occupations	17.0	21.7
Associate Professional and Technical occupations	13.4	15.1
Administrative and secretarial occupations	10.9	9.8
Skilled trades occupations	9.2	10.2
Caring, Leisure and Other Service occupations	11.8	8.7
Sales and Customer Service occupations	9.7	7.2
Process, Plant and Machine operatives	6.4	6.2
Elementary occupations	12.4	10.0
All occupations	100	100

Sources

¹ Labour Force Survey, quarter 4 2019

² Annual Population Survey 2018-2019, [Employment of disabled people](#)

³ Annual Population Survey 2018-2019, [Disability and employment](#)

SEX

Health

Data on death rates suggests that men represent 56.6% of England and Wales deaths involving COVID-19 as of 8 May 2020, as reported by ONS.²⁵⁵

The lockdown measures are having a significant impact on maternal care. There is an existing shortage of maternity workers which C-19 is exacerbating and the restrictions are impacting women's access to quality safe maternity service care. Women are at greater risk a) in the antenatal period b) during and immediately after birth c) in the postnatal period d) when problems/issues arise e.g. stillbirths. For example antenatal appointments have been reduced in line with RCOG guidance and have been conducted virtually. Women and their babies may be at greater risk of health complications as issues may be missed during virtual appointments. Many trusts are also limiting birth partners and are no longer allowing partners to be present for the birth or on the postnatal ward. Factors such as this increase the potential risk for higher rates of traumatic births and mental health challenges such as higher rates of post-natal depression in mothers and fathers.

Domestic abuse

As of 27 April 2020 calls to the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, run by Refuge, have spiked significantly during the lockdown – seeing an on average increase of around 50% in calls since lockdown measures began²⁵⁶.

Healthcare exposure

Women are at the forefront of the fight against the virus: in 2017 they made up 77% of NHS workers, 45% of hospital and community health service doctors and 89% of nurses and health visitors.²⁵⁷

A BMA council member stated that 7 out of 10 women don't have appropriately fitting PPE²⁵⁸ and are therefore at increased risk in frontline roles.

Parenting and single parent families

One-third of single parents and just over one-fifth of coupled parents work in shutdown sectors. A larger proportion of coupled parents are able to work from

²⁵⁵ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddisease/articles/coronaviruscovid19roundup/2020-03-26#coviddeaths>

²⁵⁶ <https://www.refuge.org.uk/refuge-response-to-home-affairs-select-committee-report-on-domestic-abuse-during-covid-19/>

²⁵⁷ <https://digital.nhs.uk/news-and-events/latest-news/narrowing-of-nhs-gender-divide-but-men-still-the-majority-in-senior-roles>

²⁵⁸ [BMA](#)

home, whereas single parents are concentrated in the two most severely affected groups. Some of those who are able to work from home and those who work outside the home but not in key sectors might be able to deal with care and homeschooling while also keeping their jobs. But with social restrictions limiting informal childcare help from friends and parents, some may have to reduce hours or give up work altogether to care for their children. This means some parents who would be able to work had they not had to take care of their children will be facing similar economic risks to those in shutdown sectors. This is especially true for single parents, who will have to deal with balancing work and childcare on their own, and 86% of single parents are women.²⁵⁹ Lone parent families are also most financially vulnerable to an economic shock.²⁶⁰

Unpaid childcare and carework

There is evidence that women are more likely to take on caring responsibilities, and that, of those with children who are working from home, women are spending more time on childcare and home schooling than men in the UK²⁶¹

Evidence suggests that more than half (59%) of family carers were women in 2018.²⁶²

The ONS report that 62% of 'sandwich carers' - those who care for both sick, disabled or older relatives and dependent children - are women. Caring for sick people may put women more at risk and the schools closure may mean that women will take on more childcare, forcing them to leave work, or disrupting their ability to work from home.²⁶³

Changes to work

Around half of working women are in the education, health and retail sectors - those working in some forms of retail are likely to feel the economic impact of closures, and those working in groceries will be put under increased pressure to support food availability.²⁶⁴

IFS analysis of the Labour Force Survey data suggests that one in six (17%) female employees work in closed sectors compared to one in seven (13%) of male employees.²⁶⁵

²⁵⁹

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/bulletins/familiesandhouseholds/2019#links-to-related-statistics>

²⁶⁰ Living costs and food survey, ONS

²⁶¹ <https://www.inet.econ.cam.ac.uk/working-paper-pdfs/wp2018.pdf>

²⁶² <http://www.smf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Caring-for-Carers.pdf>

²⁶³ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/ivinglongerhowourpopulationischangingandwhyitmatters/2019-03-15>

²⁶⁴ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2019>

²⁶⁵ <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/14791>

Men were slightly more likely than women to be currently furloughed, working on reduced hours or having their employer impose temporary leave at 24% compared to 21% of women.²⁶⁶

In the UK, women on average report they can do 41% of their tasks from home, compared to 46% for men.²⁶⁷

Women are disproportionately represented in lower income occupations such as caring, leisure and other services (80%) , sales and customer service (63%) and administrative and secretarial roles (76%), while men comprise more elementary and trades related occupations (74% male) and dominate process, plant and machine operatives (87% male).²⁶⁸ Despite this, women are less represented in higher paid positions than men such as manager, director and senior official roles, professional occupations and associate professional and technical occupations.²⁶⁹

We know that many women are struggling with existing debt. Of the 8.8 million people struggling with debt in the UK, 64% are women²⁷⁰. There is a risk that the current situation could compound existing debt problems. Some women who already struggle with low credit scores may be experiencing increased financial risk and concerns around exacerbating their situation.

Wellbeing and mental health

Women are more likely to indicate that they are not coping as well as usual due to the impact of coronavirus, at 34% compared to 24% of men.²⁷¹

The Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey (2014), found that women were more likely than men to have reported symptoms for common mental disorders in England (19% of women compared with 12% of men). Women were also more likely than men to report severe symptoms of common mental disorders (10% of women compared with 6% of men)²⁷²

RACE

Data relating to the closure of businesses

²⁶⁶ Table 54 <https://britainthinks.com/pdfs/Covid19-Diaries-Data-Tables-April-2020.pdf>

²⁶⁷ p.19 <https://www.inet.econ.cam.ac.uk/working-paper-pdfs/wp2018.pdf>

²⁶⁸ ASHE ONS 2019

²⁶⁹ <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06838/SN06838.pdf>

²⁷⁰ <https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/blog/is-debt-more-of-a-female-issue-than-male>

²⁷¹ Table 1 <https://britainthinks.com/pdfs/Covid19-Diaries-Data-Tables-April-2020.pdf>

²⁷² <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/adult-psychiatric-morbidity-survey/adult-psychiatric-morbidity-survey-survey-of-mental-health-and-wellbeing-england-2014#key-facts>

Self employed

20.4% of workers in the combined Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic group were self-employed, the highest percentage out of all ethnic groups.

[People from the Bangladeshi ethnic group](#) are the least likely to work from home out of all ethnic groups, 2.3% of Bangladeshi workers mainly work from home. Also, 2.4% of Black workers mainly work from home.

Income distribution and deprivation

Between 2008/09 and 2017/18, people from Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds were the most likely out of all ethnic groups to be in low income.

Among the broad ethnic groups, Asian people were most likely to live in the most deprived neighbourhoods, followed by Black people – 15.7% and 15.2% of these groups lived in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods.

Among the specific ethnic groups, Pakistani and Bangladeshi people were most likely to live in the most deprived neighbourhoods – 31.1% of Pakistani people and 19.3% of Bangladeshi people lived in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods.

[The coronavirus \(COVID-19\) has, so far, had a proportionally higher impact on the most deprived areas](#), and people from some ethnic minority groups (other than White) are more likely to live in such areas.

As with mortality rates for all causes of death, [COVID-19's effects are worse the more deprived an area is](#). However, in the most deprived areas, COVID-19 has had a proportionally higher impact.

[Looking at deaths involving the coronavirus](#), the rate for the least deprived area was 25.3 deaths per 100,000 population and the rate in the most deprived area was 55.1 deaths per 100,000 population; this is 118% higher than the least deprived area. This compares with a difference in rates of 88% for all deaths.

[In 2019](#), people from ethnic minority groups (except the Indian, Chinese, White Irish and White other groups) were more likely than White British people to live in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods in England.

Pakistani people were over 3 times more likely, and Bangladeshi people over twice as likely, as White British people to live in the most deprived [10% of neighbourhoods in England](#).

[In the 3-year period from 2015/16 to 2017/18, the ethnic groups with the largest percentage of households in the two lowest quintiles](#) were Pakistani (76%), Bangladeshi (74%) and Black (62%) by comparison, 37% of White British households fell into the 2 lowest income quintiles.

In the 3-year period from 2015/16 to 2017/18, [children in Bangladeshi and Pakistani households](#) were the most likely to live in low income and material deprivation out of all ethnic groups.

During 2019, [the highest percentages of Free School Meal \(FSM\) eligibility were seen in White minority groups](#) - 56% of Traveller of Irish Heritage pupils, and 39% of Gypsy/Roma pupils were eligible for FSM. 26% of Bangladeshi and 20% of Pakistani pupils were eligible for FSM.

[In 2018](#) the combined Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic group had a higher percentage of workers in the distribution, hotels and restaurants sector than any other ethnic group (30.7%)

[In 2018](#), 18% of Black workers were employed in 'caring, leisure and other services' jobs, the highest percentage out of all ethnic groups in this type of occupation

In 2018, Black workers had the highest percentage of any ethnic group working in public administration, education and health (at 43.6%)

Within the ethnic minority groups (other than White minorities), Black and other Asian ethnic groups had the highest percentage of workers aged 60 and over, 6.6%

In 2018, London (the region that has the highest proportion of its population classified as an ethnic minority group) also had the largest pay gap between White and ethnic minority employees, of 21.7%.

In 2018, the employment gap between ethnic minorities and the general population was larger in all Northern and Midlands regions than in all Southern regions. In the North East, it was 2.5 times higher than in the South East; in Scotland, it was 2.4 times higher than in London, and in the North West and Yorkshire, it was 1.5 times higher than in the South West.

The lowest employment rate for the Black ethnic group was in Wales and Scotland (56%) and the lowest employment rate for the Asian ethnic group was in Yorkshire and the Humber (57%).

Percentage of workers in each ethnic group employed by different sectors

Industry	All	Asian	Indian	Pakistani, Bangladeshi	Asian Other	Black	Mixed	White	White British	White Other	Other
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1.1	0.1	?	?	?	?	?	1.2	1.3	0.8	0.3
Banking and finance	17.5	18.1	20.5	14.6	19.0	16.7	20.1	17.4	17.1	19.5	20.9
Construction	7.2	3.0	3.8	2.5	2.3	4.0	4.1	7.7	7.7	7.6	5.1
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	18.2	24.2	18.6	30.7	24.7	14.9	20.4	17.8	17.5	19.9	23.7
Energy and water	1.7	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.7	1.9	2.0	1.3	1.1
Manufacturing	9.0	6.1	8.0	4.6	4.7	4.6	7.5	9.5	9.2	11.4	6.9
Other services	6.0	4.3	3.7	4.0	5.6	5.5	8.6	6.0	6.1	5.6	7.2
Public admin, education and health	30.2	27.5	26.8	25.2	31.7	43.6	28.3	30.1	31.0	22.6	22.5
Transport and communication	9.1	16.1	17.7	17.8	11.1	9.7	10.3	8.4	8.1	11.3	12.4

? Data withheld because a small sample size makes it unreliable

Source: [Annual Population Survey 2018](#)

Working from home

[People from the Bangladeshi ethnic group](#) are the least likely to work from home out of all ethnic groups, 2.3% of Bangladeshi workers mainly work from home.

2.4% of Black workers mainly work from home.

Single parent households

When considering ethnicity, we know that [18.9% of Black households were made up of a single parent with dependent children](#), the highest percentage out of all ethnic groups for this type of household.

[Data relating to the restrictions on movement and restrictions on gatherings](#)

Mental Health

The APMS also found that psychotic disorder and bipolar disorder were more than twice as common amongst Black compared to White ethnic groups. This could be due to real higher prevalence of serious, and in a number of cases, *undiagnosed* mental illness amongst BAME groups.

Black people are 4 times more likely than white people to be detained under the Mental Health Act (England, 2017/18).

In 2018/19, people in the Black Caribbean specific ethnic group were the most likely to use mental health learning disabilities and autism services, out of all ethnic groups for which ethnicity was reliably recorded

Domestic abuse

NB: It is important to note that domestic abuse statistics are not straightforward to interpret, so substantive conclusions about the relationship between ethnicity and domestic abuse cannot be drawn. That said, we base the assessment made in this section on the latest reliable data available.

According to the [ONS Crime Survey](#) for England and Wales, for the year ending March 2019:

- Women in the Mixed ethnic group were more than twice as likely to experience domestic abuse than White women (20.0% compared with 7.2%)
- Asian women have a low rate of reported domestic abuse - women from the Mixed ethnic group (20.0%) were more likely than Asian (5.7%) or White women (7.2%) to report being victims of domestic abuse.
- The current 'stay at home' restrictions give rise to particular concerns on **domestic violence**. Between April 2018 and March 2019, 5.7% of people aged 16 to 74 in England and Wales reported having been a victim of domestic abuse in the last 12 months. People of Mixed ethnicity (12.9%) were more likely to have experienced domestic abuse than White (5.6%) or Asian people (3.8%). In the Mixed and White ethnic groups, women were more likely than men to have experienced domestic abuse in the past year

Living conditions

Poor housing conditions and overcrowded households could lead to a quicker transmission of COVID-19 if a member of their household is infected:

- [In 2014 to 2017](#), around 679,000 (3%) of the estimated 23 million households in England were overcrowded (that is, they had fewer bedrooms than they needed to avoid undesirable sharing); around 2% of White British households experienced overcrowding, compared with 30% of Bangladeshi households (the highest percentage)
- [In the 2 years to March 2018](#), an average of 4% of households in England had damp in at least one room of their home (871,000 homes). Bangladeshi and Black African households were more likely to have damp problems than White British households

- [In almost every region of England](#), White British households were less likely to be overcrowded than households from all other ethnic groups combined. London had the highest percentage of overcrowded households for ethnic minorities (excluding White minorities)

TABLE: Percentage of households that were overcrowded, by ethnicity

Asian	
Bangladeshi	30
Chinese	7
Indian	7
Pakistani	16
Asian other	10
Black	
Black African	15
Black Caribbean	8
Black other	13
Mixed	
Mixed White/Asian	3
Mixed White/Black African	8
Mixed White/Black Caribbean	6
Mixed other	3
White	
White British	2
White Irish	4
White Gypsy/Traveller	?
White other	7
Other	
Arab	15

Source: [English Housing Survey](#) 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17 (combined)

[Centre for Cities research](#) shows that those now working from home in south east England as a result of covid-19, have less living space per person to do this, when compared to those living in non-urban areas. As the table above highlights, ethnic minority groups are more likely to live in overcrowded households, and this will partly be as a result of lower incomes and larger families. As such, working from home will disproportionately impact ethnic minority groups.

TABLE: Percentage of households living in non-decent homes by ethnicity

Ethnicity	%
White British	18
White Irish	15
White Gypsy or Irish Traveller	?
White Other	20
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	12
Mixed White and Black African	27
Mixed White and Asian	?
Mixed Other	20
Indian	15
Pakistani	21
Bangladeshi	25
Chinese	4
Asian Other	20
Black African	20
Black Caribbean	17
Black Other	?
Arab	12
Other	21

Source: [English Housing Survey](#) April 2016 to March 2018 (2 years combined)

The above data shows that ethnic minority groups are more likely to live in non-decent homes that lack modern facilities, are in states of disrepair or have ineffective insulation or heating. The restrictions on movement and closure of businesses and venues as a result of COVID-19, are expected to have a disproportionate impact on ethnic minority groups. The increase in time spent in non-decent homes, particularly with larger-than-average family sizes, may have a detrimental impact on their physical and mental wellbeing. Reduced income as a result of the lockdown will make it more difficult to afford home repairs which will reinforce and lengthen the associated impacts of non-decent homes on well-being.

Geography

Geography is just one of a number of key factors that determine how vulnerable people are to COVID-19.

In the UK, people in urban areas are more likely to spread the virus because of the higher population density, ample leisure amenities, a generally younger population, and a lot of people using crowded public transport.

- People from Pakistani (99.1%), Bangladeshi (98.7%), and Black African (98.2%) backgrounds were most likely to live in an urban location.
- Almost 30% of the Pakistani population lives in urban areas in Birmingham (13.0%), Bradford (9.5%), Manchester (3.9%) and Kirklees (3.7%).
- More than 40% of the Bangladeshi population lives in urban areas in Tower Hamlets (18.4%), Newham (8.4%), Birmingham (7.4%), Oldham (3.7%) and Redbridge (3.6%).
- Almost 30% of the Black African population lives in urban areas Southwark (4.9%), Newham (3.9%), Lambeth (3.6%), Greenwich (3.6%), Lewisham (3.3%), Birmingham (3.1%), Croydon (3.0%), Barking and Dagenham (3.0%)
- Gypsy or Irish Travellers (24.7%), and people identifying as White British (21.8%) or White Irish (10.0%) are most likely to live in a rural location; outside the White ethnic groups, people from the Mixed White and Asian group are most likely to live in a rural location, at 9.5%

Public transport use

Areas with high levels of public transport use, such as London, might see the virus spread quicker. A higher percentage of trips are made by public transport (in particular by bus) by people in ethnic minority groups.

- For the average of the years 2014-2018, Black people made around 19% of all their trips by local bus. The figure was 13% for people in the Other group, 10% for the Mixed group and 9% for Asian people. This compares to around 5% for White people.
- There are many factors explaining the higher public transport use by people in ethnic minority groups. However, some of it is explained by the higher proportions of ethnic minority people living in urban areas with better developed public transport systems.

SOCIO ECONOMIC INFORMATION

Ability to work

White collar occupations (assumed to be on higher salaries) are shown as able to perform a higher share of tasks from home than more manual or blue collar roles (likely to be on lower salaries). Approximate share of tasks that can be done from home by occupation include:

- Management = 60%
- Business and finance operation = just over 60%
- Computer and mathematical = just under 70%
- Architecture and engineering = 55%
- Community and social service = 45%
- Legal = 50%
- Healthcare practitioners = 10%
- Healthcare support = 10%
- Protective services = just over 0%
- Food preparation and service = 0%
- Building and grounds cleaning = just over 0%
- Personal care services = 0%
- Sales and related occupations = 10%
- Office and administrative support = 50%
- Farming, fishing and forestry = just over 0%
- Construction and extraction = 5%
- Transportation = 0%
- Military specific operations = 25%²⁷³

Private sector employees are much more likely to be currently furloughed, working on reduced hours or having their employer impose temporary leave at 46% compared to 25% of public sector employees.

People of a C2 social grade were the most likely to be currently furloughed, working on reduced hours or having their employer impose temporary leave at 29% against 23% of C1, while people of AB and DE social grade reported 19%.²⁷⁴

²⁷³ p.30 <https://www.inet.econ.cam.ac.uk/working-paper-pdfs/wp2018.pdf>

²⁷⁴ Table 54 <https://britainthinks.com/pdfs/Covid19-Diaries-Data-Tables-April-2020.pdf>

Wellbeing

There is a steady decline from DE to AB social grades in how well people are coping with the impact that COVID is having on their life. Percentage reporting not coping well²⁷⁵:

- AB - 21%
- C1 - 28%
- C2 - 34%
- DE - 36%

Mental Health

The Marmot Review into Health Inequalities in England (2020)²⁷⁶ reported that children living in poverty in England were over three times more likely to suffer from mental health problems than children who are not poor. This inequality may be exacerbated during the pandemic because children living in poverty are less likely to have frequent access to green space or digital technology in order to engage in activities beneficial for their mental health.

²⁷⁵ Table 1 <https://britainthinks.com/pdfs/Covid19-Diaries-Data-Tables-April-2020.pdf>

²⁷⁶ <https://www.health.org.uk/publications/reports/the-marmot-review-10-years-on>

INFO ON BUSINESS IMPACT

Question: What is the current trading status of your enterprise?

Percentage of all responding businesses, broken down by industry, UK, 6 April to 19 April 2020

Industry	Continuing to trade	Has permanently ceased trading **	Has temporarily closed or temporarily paused trading
Manufacturing	79.0%	*	20.6%
Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste Management And Remediation Activities	90.0%	*	10.0%
Construction	73.2%	*	26.1%
Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair Of Motor Vehicles And Motorcycles	75.2%	*	24.3%
Accommodation And Food Service Activities	18.2%	1.2%	80.6%
Transportation And Storage	91.5%	*	8.5%
Information And Communication	95.0%	*	4.5%
Professional, Scientific And Technical Activities	96.7%	*	3.0%
Administrative And Support Service Activities	91.5%	*	8.1%
Education	86.8%	*	12.6%
Human Health And Social Work Activities	93.8%	1.4%	4.9%
Arts, Entertainment And Recreation	20.5%	*	79.5%
All Industries	76.7%	*	22.8%

Source: [Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey \(BICS\)](#) 07 May 2020 update

Question: In the last two weeks, roughly what proportion of your business's

workforce was doing each of the following?

Proportion of businesses continuing to trade, broken down by industry, UK, 6 April to 19 April 2020

Industry	Working at their normal place of work	Working remotely instead of their place of work	Other
Manufacturing	54.5%	26.5%	19.0%
Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste Management And Remediation Activities	51.8%	26.0%	22.2%
Construction	32.5%	34.6%	32.9%
Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair Of Motor Vehicles And Motorcycles	38.7%	35.7%	25.6%
Accommodation And Food Service Activities	42.1%	14.4%	43.5%
Transportation And Storage	58.8%	22.1%	19.1%
Information And Communication	8.0%	86.6%	5.4%
Professional, Scientific And Technical Activities	12.3%	77.6%	10.1%
Administrative And Support Service Activities	35.5%	39.6%	24.9%
Education	11.8%	77.0%	11.2%
Human Health And Social Work Activities	61.1%	29.2%	9.7%
Arts, Entertainment And Recreation	10.2%	57.4%	32.4%
All Industries	34.1%	46.8%	19.1%

Source: [Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey \(BICS\)](#) 07 May 2020 update

Question: In the last two weeks, roughly what proportion of your enterprise's workforce was furloughed, off sick due to coronavirus or made redundant?

Proportion of businesses continuing to trade, broken down by industry, UK, 6 April to 19 April 2020

Industry	On furlough leave (Under the terms of the UK Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme)	Off sick or in self-isolation due to coronavirus with statutory or company pay	Made redundant	Working as normal	Other
Manufacturing	23.4%	4.3%		*69.1%	3.1%
Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste Management And Remediation Activities	25.3%	3.5%		*65.9%	5.1%
Construction	45.7%	2.4%		*49.5%	2.0%
Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair Of Motor Vehicles And Motorcycles	34.2%	2.5%		*60.1%	2.9%
Accommodation And Food Service Activities	49.8%	3.4%		*42.7%	3.7%
Transportation And Storage	31.1%	3.8%		*62.6%	2.3%
Information And Communication	11.3%	1.0%		*84.4%	3.2%
Professional, Scientific And Technical Activities	18.7%	1.6%		*76.6%	2.9%
Administrative And Support Service Activities	33.9%	2.6%		*58.4%	4.6%
Education	13.1%	3.0%		*77.0%	6.7%
Human Health And Social Work Activities	8.2%	8.2%		*80.8%	2.7%
Arts, Entertainment And Recreation	46.5%	1.4%		*49.1%	2.7%
All Industries	26.4%	2.9%		*67.0%	3.4%

Source: [Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey \(BICS\)](#) 07 May 2020 update