This guide is provided to help line managers and HR to ensure that all aspects of an employee's maternity leave have been addressed.

1. **When your employee tells you she is pregnant:**
   1. Arrange a workplace assessment.
   2. Employers are required by law to protect the health and safety of employees who are pregnant, have recently given birth, or who are breastfeeding. Protection starts as soon as you know your employee is pregnant, so the assessment should be a priority following notification of the pregnancy.
   3. Explain your employee's right to time off for antenatal care, and that except in the case of her first appointment, the employee must be prepared to show you evidence of such appointments.
   4. 3. Explain the time scales for notification and direct your employee to the information on maternity in your policy or handbook.
2. **At the qualifying week, 15 weeks before the due date:**
   1. Check that you have issued a Maternity leave plan for completion.
   2. Completing the maternity plan is not a legal requirement to be able to claim maternity leave and pay, but it will give you all the information you will need. If you go through the form with your employee, it will help you to ensure that she understands her entitlements and obligations. Make sure that you use the Maternity leave dates calculator to check the correct dates for the qualifying week.
   3. Check that you have received a MATB1 form to notify you that an employee is pregnant. MATB1 medical certificates are issued to pregnant women at approximately the 25th week of pregnancy. However, depending on appointment dates, the date the certificate is received could be a little later. You should ask your employee to give you her certificate as soon as she receives it.
   4. Ensure that you have gone through the timeline with your employee to make sure you are aware of:
      1. her intentions with regard to returning to work
      2. the EWC
      3. her intended maternity leave start date
      4. whether she intends (if eligible) to take up Shared Parental Leave (SPL).
   5. Check that you have kept a copy of the maternity plan for your records and that you have given your employee a copy.
   6. Check that you have acknowledged the plan with a maternity letter.
   7. Discuss the employee's wishes regarding arrangements for keeping in contact during the maternity leave.
   8. Discuss the option of 'Keeping in Touch' days, what these might entail and how payment for these will be arranged.