

Managing youth sector activities and spaces during COVID-19



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NYA
National Youth Agency

Forewords

When young people have a sense of belonging our communities are stronger. Youth sector activities provide somewhere to go, something to do and someone to talk to. They represent a rich and varied range of youth and community organisations, professional youth workers and volunteers. With young people at their heart, youth services are a vital lifeline to many vulnerable or disadvantaged young people in particular.

Most easily recognised in youth clubs, uniformed groups, residential centres, youth councils and community projects, youth sector activities include volunteering, social action, skills and enterprise, peer support groups and young people led campaigns. Activities take place in community buildings, are street-based, in parks, outward bound and online. All provide a safe space for young people to come together with friends, explore their identity, learn new skills and have fun.

The sector has faced significant challenges in response to COVID-19 pandemic. Much of the regular provision has stopped or adapted with reduced levels of activity, youth and community centres closed, residential trips cancelled. Therefore, NYA has published this guidance on youth sector activities to ensure the safety of young people, youth leaders and volunteers through COVID-19 and its aftermath. It complements a **readiness framework alongside a set of planning tools and resources** co-produced with youth sector partners to help inform decision-making in support of local activities. We are grateful for the insights and time given by others to help produce this guidance in support of such a vital and vibrant youth sector.

Leigh Middleton, Chief Executive
National Youth Agency

Youth work can be transformational and youth sector activities provide an essential service for young people and communities. Thousands of youth workers and volunteers make a valuable difference to young people's lives - they build trusted relationships and create opportunities for them to thrive. Our youth services allow young people to develop the confidence to make decisions and act on issues that affect their lives, lives of others, their communities and civil society.

As we look to return to "normal", now more than ever we value the contributions of young people, as volunteers supporting others, and the hard work and dedication of the youth sector. Their combined efforts will be vital in helping us recover and adapt in the months to come.

Baroness Barran MBE
Minister for Civil Society
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport



The NYA is the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) for youth work in England and as such is the national partner for the government, the Local Government Association and non-governmental bodies, and with relevant bodies in related professions (such as teaching, policing and social care).

The NYA sets the standards for youth sector organisations in recognition of practice, qualifications and the youth work curriculum and convenes the National Youth Advisory Body for policy advice and guidance. We have worked with an expert group of youth work practitioners, national youth organisations and young people to shape this document.



Public Health
England



HSE
Health & Safety
Executive

This document has been prepared in consultation with Public Health England (PHE), the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

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1.0 Introduction

The youth sector is diverse and includes statutory, voluntary, uniformed and private organisations as funders, commissioners and providers of activities and spaces for young people. These organisations provide services and activities outside of but often complementary to other statutory services, such as schools, colleges and child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS).

This guidance is only intended for use in England. There is current advice and guidance that should be adhered to for the formal, statutory services and national guidance from Public Health England (PHE) on social distancing, travel and other measures for COVID-19. This guidance is complementary and contextualised for youth sector organisations and is intended to support organisations as they prepare for the appropriate reopening of services.

The youth sector has specific and unique challenges and needs, and this guidance has been developed to support your practice.

Youth sector organisations typically work with young people aged 8 to 25 years, although other age groups are recognised. This guidance takes into consideration the safety and support needed for young people, staff and volunteers and wider public health considerations for youth services and activities.

There is a wide range of youth provision, normally defined as 'youth work', which includes open-access work through youth centres, community projects, volunteering and youth social action, alongside targeted services and specialist groups for vulnerable young people. Such activities are run by local groups, community organisations and local authorities or as part of national programmes. The types of activity include, for example, youth clubs, street-based youth work, peer-led youth groups, uniformed youth groups, youth councils, outdoor education and residential trips.

National associations for specific types of organisations (uniformed, etc.) and activities may have additional advice and guidance to safeguard young people and in related areas of sports, culture and the arts, which are included in or make use of facilities for youth activities.

This guidance is intended to support councils, local voluntary providers, leaders, volunteers and young people to remain safe when engaging in youth sector activities. This guidance must be used in conjunction with your existing safeguarding and welfare policies and procedures.

It is important to recognise that this guidance only sets out the steps required to operate safely. If local providers/centres/units have any concerns about the health and safety, care towards young people/ staff or reputational risk, then keeping provision closed is the responsible course of action recommended by the NYA.



We expect that this document will be updated over time. This version is up-to-date as of **17th May 2021**. You can check for updates at www.nya.org.uk

If you have any questions or feedback for us, please email guidance@nya.org.uk

2.0 How to use this guide

This document is intended to support the youth sector's response as lockdown rules change. It is recognised that the level of lockdown will vary over time and by location if local restrictions are applied. To support youth sector organisations when reacting to these changes a readiness framework and level is provided. Changes are published weekly on the [NYA's website](#) and provides guidance as to the nature and capacity of activity recommended at each level.

At all times, youth sector organisations must follow current Public Health England and Health and Safety Executive advice. Organisations should follow the current permitted activity guidance on the NYA website. Please note, there will be a deliberate delay between the government easing restrictions and the NYA updating our website. This is to allow organisations time to prepare, assess risks and safely manage any needed changes. Organisations should follow the latest statement on our website at all times.

Alongside adhering to the framework's guidance, all proposed activities and changes must be subject to a risk assessment, which should be enhanced when physical spaces/buildings /land are to be used.



All providers of youth provisions and services must complete a COVID-19 action plan (see details below). These plans are intended to ensure that you have considered all reasonable aspects of activities before opening provision at a local level.



More information to support your plans with check lists and templates can be found at <https://youthworksupport.co.uk>. The templates can be adapted to fit your context and are provided as best practice tools.

If you wish to learn of changes and amendments to our guidance and local lockdowns, we recommend joining the NYA Network. The network is free and gives all members access to the NYA's resources library and regular newsletters. Join here: <https://nya.org.uk/register/>

3.0 Limitations of this guide

The youth sector is diverse and includes statutory and voluntary services, professionally qualified and volunteer youth workers/leaders and a wide range of approaches to the delivery of youth services and activities with young people. It is not possible for this guide to capture all nuanced types of practice; therefore, this document should be used as a guide to inform local decision making.

The Department for Education publishes separate guidance for [out of school settings](#). This guidance should be used if your provision is aligned to the school day (breakfast, after school, holiday clubs for children etc) or for home tuition and other non-youth sector activities. The NYA guidance has been specifically designed to support the diverse youth sector and aims to align where practical with other sectors guidance.

Professional and risk-informed judgements must be used to design your local COVID-19 action plans. Employers, supervisors, volunteer leaders and trustees must be satisfied that any provision proposed is safe for all involved and ensure that its authorisation to continue is subject to continual review as behaviours, needs or national guidance changes.

The templates provided are intended to support this process and keep at its core the broad consideration of the local need, the risks of providing and not providing services, the places and spaces used for service delivery, the additional health and safety steps and the safeguarding for all activity, from online to group work.



The national regulations (the law) changes regularly and the NYA is required to amend the readiness level and advice according to these regulations. The NYA will always seek to allow the maximum safe level of youth sector activity at any given time. Local lockdowns or restrictions may also be required, and the NYA will advise on these requirements via our website.

4.0 National associations

If your group is affiliated with a national association (uniformed, etc.), you should check what additional guidance or requirements they have put in place to safeguard young people. They may have developed additional specific guidance for you to consider or actions required prior to commencing delivery.

National associations may ask you to follow their own additional measures they have deemed appropriate. The NYA fully supports the self-determination of national associations to add additional measures.

5.0 Equality

Equality is at the heart of the youth sector. We work to highlight and tackle the inequalities that exist in society and recognise that different groups and individuals experience discrimination and disadvantage that needs to be challenged. Therefore, it is important to ensure we create spaces, services and opportunities that enable everyone to engage equally.

This often requires adjustments to our working practices and approaches to ensure that everyone benefits fairly. Your organisation's equality and diversity policy should be considered at all times and especially when making decisions and judgements related to the impact on individuals and groups with protected characteristics.

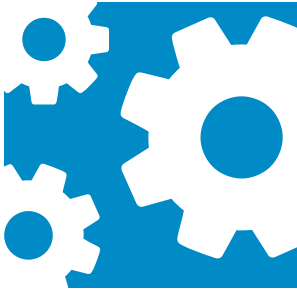
When applying this guidance, organisations should be mindful of the particular needs of different groups of workers and individuals.

It is breaking the law to discriminate, directly or indirectly, against anyone because of a protected characteristic, such as age, sex, race or disability.

Employers and organisations (voluntary or otherwise) also have additional responsibilities towards disabled individuals and those who are new or expectant mothers.

6.0 The basics of COVID secure

This guidance document will help you ensure you are COVID Secure. Although at Step 3 some restrictions are to be relaxed, the youth sector MUST remain COVID Secure and adhere to the following. There are the basics, but please ensure you read all of this document to understand the detail:



Action plan in place

(roles and responsibilities)



Risk Assessment are up-to-date



Groups/Bubbles are manageable

(age appropriate)



Hygiene is robust – handwashing etc



Venue is clean and kept clean



Face coverings are worn when needed



Social distancing is in place



NHS Test and Trace information gathered

7.0 Youth sector readiness framework

The readiness framework aligns with the NYA's published readiness level, which is updated in line with government guidance and is available on the NYA's website.

The readiness level will change as and when government advice changes. For this reason, youth sector organisations and groups are advised to monitor the readiness level on a weekly basis and cross reference this level with the guidance provided on the permitted youth sector activity. **The NYA readiness framework only applies to England.**

If the readiness level falls, this will signal that more face-to-face youth sector activity will be recommended. If the readiness level increases (due to increased levels of the virus), youth sector activity will be recommended to reduce in line with the framework and changes to the law. Existing online or digital youth sector provision can continue to take place at any level of the readiness system.

You can check the current readiness level here: <https://nya.org.uk>

The objective of the NYA's readiness level is to enable as much youth sector activity as possible to take place at each level as and when it is safe to do so and to allow youth sector leaders to make plans in accordance with the status of COVID-19 in the community.



Since 8th March 2021 the readiness framework has been updated to work with the COVID Roadmap announced by the Prime Minister on the 22nd February 2021. We recommend paying close attention to the changes. The government has proposed to withdraw the previous four tier process in favour of a national Roadmap approach.

Organisations must make their own judgements and undertake comprehensive risk assessments to decide if it is possible to comply with the guidance provided in this document. These judgements should not be informal or lightly taken decisions, rather they should be within your organisation's health and safety framework/policy and show due consideration to national guidance and insurance regulations.



Key parts of these measures are underpinned by law, which sets out clearly what you must and must not do – every person in the country must continue to comply with this. The relevant authorities, including the police, have the powers to enforce the law – including through fines and dispersing gatherings. .

The following must be in place:

- Assessment that the risk to workers, young people and the community can be safely managed
- Ability to meet core government guidance
- Effective safeguarding arrangements
- All children and young people should be safeguarded
- Enhanced cleaning arrangements are in place
- Ability to comply with social distancing requirements and limits on gathering sizes which is underpinned by UK law
- Ability to ensure hygiene levels are maintained, including for frequent hand washing/cleansing with alcohol gel
- The risk to workers, young people and the community being safely managed
- Whether the most vulnerable in society can be effectively safeguarded



If you feel your local situation cannot be managed in a safe way, you should not re-open until you have put sufficient measures in place. This is essential for avoiding unnecessary risks to your staff, young people and the community.

The framework provided explains the types of activities that are expected to be allowed at each level as the national restrictions are eased or tightened. These exist to support providers of youth sector activities to prepare for the next level up or down. It takes time to develop action plans, risk assessments, staff training and prepare venues so the framework is provided as a guide to what you can prepare for next.

The NYA strictly follows the regulations set out by the Government and Public Health England. If the size of groups allowed to meet in a socially distanced manner indoors or outdoors changes, so will the advice from the NYA.

You should follow the week's readiness level and the permitted activity advice provided on the NYA website. This will show the current alert level and the exact permitted activity within the law.

Prior to changing your activities in line with the alert level, you must review, amend, and update your action plan and risk assessments. These should be approved in line with your national association's policy on implementing the readiness framework, where this is applicable. NYA will seek to provide national associations with advanced notice of planned changes to the readiness level.

Readiness framework

The framework below is used to guide the youth sectors activities during COVID-19.

Readiness Level	Permitted Activity Expected
RED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online and digital youth services • Detached/outdoor local youth services • 1-2-1 sessions with high-need young people (indoors) • Small group work sessions indoors with high need young people (consistent with social distancing guidelines)
AMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online and digital youth services • Detached/outdoor local youth services (consistent with social distancing guidelines) • 1-2-1 sessions with young people • Group sessions delivered indoors
YELLOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online and digital youth services • Detached/outdoor local youth services (consistent with social distancing guidelines) • 1-2-1 sessions with young people • Group sessions delivered indoors (consistent with social distancing guidelines) • Camping and overnight residentials
GREEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All services open as per normal yearly operations • Overnight trips and visits • International travel allowed within Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice

Applying the Readiness Framework to the COVID Roadmap

The government has published the '[COVID-19 Response - Spring 2021](#)' setting out the Roadmap out of the current lockdown for England. This explains how restrictions will be eased over time.

The Roadmap has four steps (although Step 1 has two parts):



This section of the guide explains how the Roadmap applies to the youth sector. The government has outlined a four step plan for reducing restrictions across England. At each step four tests must be passed, these are:

1. The vaccine deployment programme continues successfully.
2. Evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths in those vaccinated.
3. Infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS.
4. Our [the Government's] assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern.

It is very possible that the planned implementation dates for each step will change (be extended) if more time is needed between steps. For this reason, the dates for each step should be considered to be **'no earlier than dates, and subject to change'**.

The NYA strongly advises against planning activities that are non-refundable until each step has been confirmed. The NYA has created a dedicated webpage with details of each step and the current implementation dates, activities and support available. Visit <https://nya.org.uk/guidance/> for details.

Roadmap Step 1 (8th March 2021)

Steps 1A and 1B are now complete.

Roadmap Step 2 (12th April 2021)

Step 2 is now complete. From the 17th May 2020 England moved to Step 3 (see below).

Roadmap Step 3 (from 17th May 2021)

All young people will be able to attend indoor or outdoor activities. However, the law applies differently for provision for young people under and over 18yrs of age.

Youth provision for under 18's (and those who have only turned 18 post 31st August 2020) may meet indoors or outdoors without limitations on group size. The regulations no longer require youth sector providers to limit their bubble sizes to a maximum number of attendees (per bubble).

However, the NYA recommends that providers review their Action Plans and Risk Assessments and take steps to reduce the risk of community transmission. For example, consider how to manage groups of young people to a manageable number to minimise the risk of transmission. All standard COVID Secure measures (social distancing, hygiene and face coverings etc) will continue to be required.

Youth provision for over 18's may meet indoors or outdoors in 'Support Groups' for vulnerable young people in groups of up to 30 (plus staff, volunteers, and carers). Indoor provision when not part of a support group (detached or adhoc delivery) must comply with the rule of six (including workers/volunteers). Support groups must be by invitation only.

Online/digital, detached/outdoor and 1-2-1 youth sector provision will remain available to all young people.

Trips and visits are permitted and should remain local and should be completed the same day. Travel by minibus, taxi, public transport, or private car (subject to safeguarding) are permitted. When traveling organisers risk assessments should include the use of face coverings (for over 11's where appropriate), social distancing measures where practical and good hygiene measures. Consider if a trip is necessary or if the same outcome can be achieved without the trip taking place. The youth sector's goal at all times should be to minimise the risk of COVID transmission.

NB. If visiting a third parties' venue, your group will need to fully comply with their COVID measures as well as this youth sector guidance. Some providers may require the use of bubbles and/or smaller group sizes etc to operate safely.

Overnight and residential experiences are permitted following strict requirements. During Step 3 only groups of six are permitted. Each group of six includes all workers, leaders, or staff members (plus carers or key workers). For more detail on leading residentials and overnight events please see section below for more detail.

International travel remains prohibited, but under review.

If you feel your local situation cannot be managed in a safe way, you should not re-open until you have put sufficient measures in place. This is essential for avoiding unnecessary risks to your staff, young people and the community.

Youth sector providers should not plan or commit to any activities or expenses until the NYA confirms the implementation of Step 3 has been approved. Youth sector providers can check the latest status via the NYA website.

Roadmap Step 4 (no earlier than 21st June 2021)

From the beginning of Step 4 the NYA expects the Readiness Level to change to **GREEN**.

It is highly likely that at Step 4 some restrictions and requirements will remain.

8.0 Delivering Residential Educational Experiences Safely

The youth sector is permitted to provide overnight and residential experiences from Step 3. There are a number of key requirements which must be followed:

1. Only six individuals are permitted per group.
2. The total head count for each group INCLUDES leaders/carers etc.
3. Each group of six is not permitted to interact with any other groups.
4. Multiple groups of six are possible. However, they must not mix at any time, including during dining, free time and during activities.
5. Each group of six must travel independently of all other groups at all times.
6. Members of a group should be tested using lateral flow tests every 48-72hrs (similar to schools). Including leaders/staff.
7. Groups must follow each venue's COVID Secure requirements, including social distancing, use of face coverings and hygiene.

Based on PHE advice, the following sets out the additional conditions that should be implemented for the educational overnight or residential to take place.

Youth sector providers must carry out a thorough risk assessment for the educational visit in line with existing general and COVID-19 specific guidance and the following conditions:

- Ensure children and staff attending the residential visit are in consistent groups or “bubbles” of no more than six people (including leaders/carers).
- Where you have already assigned young people to “bubbles” for your normal day-to-day provision, you should, as far as possible, try to keep young people from the same bubble together when undertaking residential visits in groups of six. This will minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19 when children and staff members return from the residential visit to your setting.
- Consider how you will ensure bubbles of no more than six people are maintained throughout the visit. For example, by ensuring that, bubbles are kept separate when in shared dining facilities and other shared areas, activities or during recreation time, and young people and staff do not interact with or mix between bubbles.
- Ensure that bubbles from your youth group do not mix with groups from other settings, or other guests. You should not use residential visits to engage and meet with partnered youth groups, such as those that are based in other parts of the country.

- Engage in asymptomatic testing. Staff should self-test twice a week. Children aged 12-17 should also self-test twice a week, with adult supervision. You should consider encouraging staff and children to engage in asymptomatic testing before and after the residential visit. See the asymptomatic testing section for more information, including advice on how to access test kits.
- Ensure that there are clear contingency plans in place to respond immediately to:
 - Changes in government guidance
 - A child/ staff member testing positive
 - A child/ staff member needing to self-isolate due to being identified as a close contact
 - A child / staff member becoming symptomatic during the visit

Risk Assessments

Youth sector providers should undertake full and thorough risk assessments in relation to all educational visits to ensure they can be undertaken safely. Where appropriate, you should implement the DfE health and [safety guidance on educational visits](#) and the [Health and safety Executives \(HSE\) Risk assessment - Working safely during the COVID-19 pandemic](#).

Your risk assessment and extra planning should reflect the public health restrictions in place and your residential visit provider should be able to provide you with the evidence to demonstrate how their centre meets the requirements set out in [Hotels and other guest accommodation - Working safely during COVID-19](#). You should request this information prior to any visit and pay particular attention to how the centre will manage any COVID-19 outbreaks during your stay and what arrangements you will need to have in place should a member of staff or child/ young person become symptomatic.

You will also need to ensure that you have carefully considered the system of controls section of this guidance.

It is worth noting that consideration should be given to spending as much time as possible outdoors as this reduces the rate of transmission of the virus.

Accommodation

You should familiarise yourself and your staff members with the [Hotels and other guest accommodation - Working safely during COVID-19](#).

You should note the guidance states that overnight stays in guest accommodation should happen in groups of no more than six people / support bubbles including staff. This is because overnight sleeping arrangements place children, young people and adults at the most risk of exposure to COVID-19

Accommodation providers should reflect how separate groups of 6 can be maintained throughout the visit in their risk assessments. As part of your own risk assessment, you should carefully consider how consistent groups of no more than 6 people (including at least one staff member) can be maintained throughout the visit.

In advance of any visit, it will be important for you to confirm arrangements with the accommodation provider, especially with regard to maintaining the integrity of the bubble, arrangements for overnight accommodations and travel to, from and during the visit. [Hotels and other guest accommodation - Working safely during COVID-19](#) sets out the process and procedures any accommodation provider should follow when they are welcoming guests on residential visits or overnight stays.

You should check in advance that the provider has assessed the risk of COVID-19 and implemented appropriate control measures. In particular, you should ask the accommodation provider to confirm that they:

- are confident they can maintain the integrity of the bubbles and minimise mixing with other guests and bubbles
- have assessed overnight sleeping arrangements in line with the size of the group that will be expected to share rooms and/or dormitories.
- ensure appropriate ventilation at all times, particularly during overnight sleeping arrangements. Good ventilation reduces the concentration of the virus in the air, which reduces the risks from airborne transmission.
- measures are in place to ensure that sanitising and cleaning of any shared facilities such as:
 - bathroom
 - kitchen/dinning
 - or any potentially shared equipment/communal facilities

The accommodation provider should, if asked, be in a position to set out to you how the integrity of the bubbles can be maintained throughout the visit.

If a young person or staff member is symptomatic, tests positive for COVID-19, or is a close contact of someone who tests positive for COVID-19.

You should encourage children and staff members to [engage in asymptomatic testing where appropriate](#).

[Hotels and other guest accommodation - Working safely during COVID-19](#) sets out the procedures that accommodation providers should follow if a guest has symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19.

Before undertaking a residential visit or overnight stay, you should discuss these procedures with the accommodation provider to ensure you are familiar with the steps that should be taken if a staff member or child in your out-of-school setting group becomes symptomatic or tests positive.

If this happens, in the first instance, accommodation providers have been advised in the [Hotels and other guest accommodation - Working safely during COVID-19](#) guidance that they should inform the relevant guest (and any relevant members of the group, such as those sharing a room) that they need to immediately self-isolate.

If possible, the child, young person or staff member should return home to self-isolate. If they choose to return home, they should use private transport. In the case of a staff member falling ill or needing to self-isolate, the young person in their group will also need to return home as it will not be possible to merge bubbles into a group larger than 6, or for one staff member to work across two bubbles.

If a child, young person or staff member cannot reasonably return home (for example, because a child's parents are unable to collect them or they are too unwell), their circumstances should be discussed with an appropriate health care professional and, if necessary, the local authority.

Insurance

You should make sure that you have an appropriate level of insurance cover whilst on an educational visit. If unsure, you are advised to check with your insurance company or the [Risk Protection Arrangement \(RPA\)](#) for information on the level of cover/protection available especially in the event of a COVID related cancellation.

For new bookings, whilst there are still gaps in the traditional insurance market regarding COVID-19 cancellation cover, youth sector providers should be able to secure appropriate travel insurance for other aspects of their visit. Given the absence or changes to COVID-19 (cancellation) insurance, you should check that any new bookings have adequate financial protection in place.

The NYA's advice remains that youth sector providers should not book any residential or activities until it is confirmed in our guidance that your planned activities can take place.

9.0 Lateral Flow Testing for Overnight and Residential Experiences

Anyone in England who does not have symptoms can now get regular rapid lateral flow tests to check for coronavirus. For more information see [Regular rapid COVID-19 tests if you do not have symptoms](#).

How to get regular rapid tests

Order tests online

You can get a pack of 7 rapid tests sent to your home. If you do tests at home, you'll need to report your results online or on the phone.

[Order rapid lateral flow home test kits on GOV.UK](#)

Collect tests to do at home

You can collect up to 2 packs of 7 rapid tests from a local pharmacy or test site. If you do tests at home, you'll need to report your results online or on the phone. [Find where to get rapid lateral flow tests](#)

Go to a test site

You can get tested at a rapid lateral flow test site.

If you go to a test site:

- you may need an appointment, so check before you go
- a trained helper might be able to help you do the test
- you'll get a text or email with the result when it's ready

[Find where to get a rapid lateral flow test](#)

School, college and nursery testing

If you attend or work at a school, college or nursery you can get rapid tests through your school, college or nursery.

If you're in a childcare or support bubble with someone who attends or works at a school, college or nursery, you can get a rapid test at a rapid lateral flow test site or order tests to do at home.

You're advised to do a test twice a week.

Other ways to get rapid lateral flow tests

You might be able to:

- collect tests from a test site
- collect tests from a pharmacy (in England only)
- get a test at a site

If you're collecting tests, you can collect 2 packs at a time (14 tests in total).

[Find other ways to get rapid lateral flow tests on NHS.UK.](#)

Order by phone

If you cannot order online, call 119. Lines are open 7am to 11pm and calls are free.

After your test packs arrive

You should:

- take a rapid lateral flow test twice a week (every 3 or 4 days)
- [report rapid lateral flow test results](#) the day you or someone in your household takes the test, no matter what the result is.

10.0 Social distancing

It is essential to maintain social distancing wherever possible, including when arriving at and departing from a location, while delivering and when travelling between locations. The NYA's goal is to allow as much youth sector activity to take place as possible, if safe.

Social distancing becomes significantly more challenging the younger or more high need of young people. The sector needs to take all reasonable action and mitigation where possible but should have the confidence to provide services to young people during COVID19. For example, if delivering to under 8yrs or to young people with SEND, then their personal capacity to follow the rules rigidly may be imperfect – this does not need to stop provision.

Government guidance on social distancing for young people can be found [here](#).

Things to consider

- You must maintain social distancing wherever possible.
- Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full in relation to a particular activity, organisations should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the provision to operate, and if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between staff, young people and the community.
- Maintaining social distancing reduces risk, but there will be some situations where it may not be possible to fully distance, or where some contact is required to enable your programme to function and achieve its objectives. This is likely to occur between younger children or those with SEND who will find consistent distancing more challenging (whether indoors, or outside). This is acceptable for short periods for these groups of young people and provided limits on group sizes are followed.

Mitigating actions include:

- Further increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning.
- If you can deliver your activities outdoors do.
- Keeping the activity time involved as short as possible and in small groups in consistent bubbles.
- Where possible using activities where maintaining social distancing is simpler.
- Avoid any activities which risk sustained close contact or 'huddles' of young people.
- Using screens as barriers to separate people from each other.
- Using back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible.
- Reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering' (so each person works with only a few others).

- Some service users may have difficulty or challenges with the need to socially distance (for example, service users with SEND or behaviour needs). Additional support may be needed to appropriately support individuals to socially distance. Alternative provisions may need to be made to support individuals where the risks associated with their needs/ behaviours cannot be controlled effectively.
- Social distancing applies to all parts of an organisation, including pinch points such as entrances and exits, break rooms, café spaces and similar settings. These are often the most challenging areas to maintain social distancing.
- Staggered arrival and departure times for workers/volunteers and young people should be in place to reduce crowding in and out of the locations, while also considering the impact on those with protected characteristics.
- Travel to and from your venue/activities should be considered. Can staff, volunteers and young people travel safely and within current social distancing guidance? If not, you should consider any steps that can be taken to mitigate these risks (e.g. online virtual delivery). Face coverings should be worn at all times during transportation.
- Office spaces should be reviewed to ensure current social distancing guidelines are met.
- Reducing maximum occupancy for lifts, providing hand sanitiser for the operation of lifts and encouraging use of stairs wherever possible.
- Making sure that people with disabilities are able to access lifts.
- Regulating use of high traffic areas or pinch points including corridors, lifts, turnstiles and walkways to maintain social distancing.
- It may be necessary to reduce the occupancy levels of your premises to enhance social distancing for staff and volunteers; and organisations should enable people to work from home wherever possible.
- Signage should be displayed in public areas to help people maintain social distancing and handwashing/hygiene.
- Reconfiguring seating and tables to optimise spacing and reduce face-to-face interactions.



11.0 Group sizes and bubbles

From the 12th April 2021 youth provision for young people under 18yrs (and those who have only turned 18 post 31st August 2020) is no longer subject to controlled bubble/support group sizes (indoors or outdoors) for sessional activities (not overnight). However, the NYA recommends the guidance below continues to be followed where appropriate to minimise the risk of COVID-19 virus transmission.

Where it is possible to do so, providers should try to keep young people in consistent groups as they are in during the school day. This will minimise the amount of mixing between different groups outside of school, and therefore the risk of infection. We recommend working with parents and if possible, aligning with the same bubble grouping the young people are in at school/college. The goal is to minimise the amount of mixing between different groups of children and young people where at all possible.

Where it is not possible or it is impractical for youth sector organisations to group young people in the same bubbles as they are in during the school day (for example, if there are only one or two children attending the provision from the same school or school day bubble), providers may need to group children with other children from outside their school day bubble, or from a different school. If possible, try to keep young people in consistent bubbles week to week (especially if from different schools) to avoid unnecessary mixing.

If providers need to do this, we are recommending that they, as far as possible, keep children and young people in bubbles of no more than 15, of the same children and young people each time wherever possible (that is, do not mix groups unless absolutely necessary) and at least one staff member, depending on the type of provision or size of the group. Group sizes may need to be smaller than 15 children depending on factors such as age of the children and young people in attendance, size of the premises or the type of activity.

Workers/leaders are not included in the number of people in each bubble but should as far as reasonably possible remain with a single bubble. It is acceptable to have more than one bubble in your venue when supporting vulnerable young people aged 18 and over, provided there is no interaction or mixing between separate bubbles, and separate bubbles do not engage in any activities together.

It may be possible for multiple groups to convene in your venue, if all the practices stated in this document are implemented. To ensure that participants remain safe, strict adherence to the following measures is required:

- Organisers should aim to divide young people into fixed (ideally consistent) groups, with a maximum of 15 children and young people per bubble.
- Leaders and workers may move between bubbles if required to safeguard young people, manage behaviour or provide assistance. This should be avoided if possible.

- Children/young people should be placed in age appropriate bubbles.
- Members of each bubble should adhere to the current social distancing requirements.
- Different bubbles need to be in specific pre-agreed spaces with a physical barrier (wall/screens/bunting) between them.
- Upon arrival/departure, participants should wash their hands or use hand sanitiser.
- Should any member of a bubble become unwell, **all members of the bubble should contact NHS Test and Trace**. All members of the bubble (including leaders/visitors) should also be suspended from attendance and requested to self-isolate for 7 days or until NHS Test and Trace confirm it is safe to return to activities (following a negative COVID test)..
- Bubbles apply both indoors and outside at all times.
- Bubbles should not move spaces where another bubble has been unless a deep clean has been carried out of the new space.
- Social distancing should be maintained during all activities.
- Organisers should be aware of attendees who are clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable and should prepare their risk assessment accordingly.

NB: We advise organisers to re-open slowly. This means they should run pilot sessions with fewer than 15 attendees, to ensure it is possible to manage social distancing and hygiene measures in accordance with NYA guidelines.

Staff or volunteers who need to meet for the purposes of planning or training can do so outside of delivery sessions with young people. There is no staff team size limit or length of time sessions meetings/training can take place. However, serious consideration for social distancing, hygiene, face coverings and welfare must be considered.

12.0 COVID-19 secure venues

This guidance meets the government requirement for COVID Secure. If you comply with NYA guidance your venue is considered COVID Secure. This would permit groups of young people under 18yrs or support groups of up to 30 individuals if over 18yrs and vulnerable) in venues that are large enough **and** have put in place all the measures outlined in our guidance.

The use of private dwellings (including trusted adults homes and gardens) for the delivery of youth sector activity is prohibited. Home visits to vulnerable young people is permitted following appropriate safeguarding practice.

This must only be considered if your venue is large enough to have multiple distinct spaces for each bubble to meet.

How do bubbles need to work?

- Organisers should aim to divide young people into fixed (ideally consistent) bubbles, with a maximum of 15 young people (plus workers/leaders) per bubble per session.
- Bubbles should not join with other bubbles (bubbles containing vulnerable young people aged 18 and over must remain separate).
- Individuals should (and where vulnerable young people aged 18 and over are involved, must) remain in the bubble they are allocated for that day and ideally over repeat attendance, though this may not be practical in some circumstances. Where this is the case, youth sector organisations should frequently review their bubbles in order to minimise the amount of 'mixing', and should keep up-to-date records of those attending for at least 21 days, to help them to do this.
- As the risk of transmission is lower outdoors, activities should take place outdoors as often as possible and when it is safe to do so.
- Different bubbles should ideally enter and exit through different doors – when sessions begin, during breaks and when leaving the site. If not possible then stagger arrival and departure times where possible.
- Organisers should encourage young people to arrive only with members of their bubble and to avoid mingling before and after sessions. We understand that organisers have limited control in this regard, but we encourage you to brief young people and to educate them on social distancing requirements.
- Shared spaces such as sports halls, kitchens, etc. must be deep cleaned thoroughly between use if different bubbles are to use them on the same day (sequentially). Spaces should not be used at the same time by more than one bubble.
- Enhanced regular cleaning of commonly used surfaces, such as equipment and door handles, should be ensured.
- It is not necessary for each bubble to use separate toilets; however, efforts should be made to limit the numbers of users at a given time. Use of different toilets for each bubble is ideal. Please consider safeguarding concerns when planning and preparing your risk assessments.



NB: If you are unable to adhere to these requirements, you should not allow more than one bubble to attend at the same time.

13.0 Travel

Youth sector activities often include travel to events, youth voice meetings or educational venues. It is recommended to ideally walk and cycle if you can. Where this is not possible, use public transport, minibuses, taxi's or cars is allowed (subject to safeguarding requirements).

See the [guidance on car sharing](#). If using shared or public transport is necessary, wearing a face covering is mandatory (for over 11yrs), unless you are exempt for health, disability or other reasons.

You should not travel at all if you:

- are experiencing any [coronavirus symptoms](#)
- are [self-isolating as a result of coronavirus symptoms or sharing a household or support bubble with somebody with symptoms](#)
- are [clinically extremely vulnerable](#) and cannot shield during your journey
- have been advised by the [NHS test and trace service](#) that you should self-isolate

You must wear a [face covering](#) on public transport and in substantially enclosed areas of transport hubs in England. You will be breaking the law if you fail to do so and could be fined.

Some people [don't have to wear a face covering](#) for health, age or equality reasons.

The risk of transmission is small at 2 metres and where possible, you should aim to maintain 2 metres distance.

If you cannot keep a 2 metre distance, reduce the risk to yourself and others by maintaining a 1 metre distance where possible, and taking suitable precautions. Help keep yourself, other passengers and transport staff safe by taking the following precautions:

- ensure you maintain [social distancing](#), where possible, including at busy entrances, exits, under canopies, bus stops, platforms or outside of stations
- limit the number of people that you come into contact with, for example avoid peak travel
- wash or sanitise your hands regularly
- avoid touching your face
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of your elbow when coughing or sneezing
- travel side by side or behind other people, rather than facing them, where seating arrangements allow
- touch as few surfaces as possible
- stay outdoors, rather than indoors, where possible
- minimise the time spent close to other people, where possible
- avoid loud talking or shouting

- dispose of waste safely, including items such as used disposable face coverings
- be prepared to queue or take a different entrance or exit at stations
- wait for passengers to get off first before you board
- wait for the next service if you cannot safely keep your distance on board a train, bus or coach
- avoid consuming food and drink on public transport, where possible
- respect other people's space while travelling
- be aware of pregnant, older and disabled people who may require a seat or extra space
- be aware that not all disability is visible and [some people may be exempt from wearing a face covering](#)

Treat transport staff with respect and follow instructions from your transport operator. This may include:

- notices about which seats to use or how to queue
- additional screens, barriers or floor markings
- requests to board through different doors or to move to less busy areas

Seek assistance if you need it

If you require assistance when travelling, contact your transport operator as you would normally do.

If any problems arise or you feel ill during your journey, speak to a member of transport staff. In the case of an emergency, contact the emergency services as you normally would.

If you need help, try to [keep a suitable distance from members of staff](#). If this isn't possible, try to avoid physical contact and keep the time you spend near staff as short as possible.



14.0 Understanding risk

Everyone needs to assess and manage the risks of COVID-19. As a service provider or employer (voluntary or paid), you have a legal responsibility to protect workers, young people and others from risks to their health, safety and wellbeing. This means you need to think about the risks they face and do everything that is reasonably practicable to minimise them, recognising you cannot completely eliminate the risk of COVID-19.

A youth organisation may deliver a range of activities and types of provision, including local projects and services. We advise that each project/centre/unit completes a risk assessment and action plan document. The action plan will ensure that you have considered all reasonable points ahead of changing your delivery levels. This will also help you to identify the actions and steps you need to put in place to ensure appropriate and safe provision.

The action plan includes a risk assessment and will consider the wider organisational policies that must continue to govern your practice, including safeguarding, equality and health and safety policies. You should also check with your insurer that they will continue to cover your planned activities.

Your plan is required to be as simple or complex as your organisation's activities and plans. The NYA, UK Youth and the Federation for Detached Youth Work have provided templates, checklists and examples of action plans that are kept updated; go to <https://youthworksupport.co.uk>.

If your work is overseen by a national association (uniformed, etc.), then you should also follow their required actions and complementary advice. If your services are contracted by a local authority, you should also follow their required actions, advice and guidance. Additionally, each upper tier local authority has a duty to support young people and the local youth offer/service may be able to provide support for your work.

You must keep your plan under constant review and make responsive amendments to reflect the NYA's published **readiness level**. Be ready to react if the readiness level changes week-to-week, and ensure you communicate changes to young people, staff, parents/carers and other stakeholders. Your action plan should include clear information about how your service can and will respond to different readiness levels to minimise risk.

You must make sure that the risk assessment for your provision addresses the risks of COVID-19 and that this guidance is used to inform your decisions and control measures. A risk assessment is not about creating huge amounts of paperwork, rather it is about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in your setting. Your risk assessment will help you decide if you have done everything you need to.

Youth sector organisations have a duty to consult their staff members (paid or voluntary) on health and safety issues. We would also advise engaging young people in developing your plans and risk assessments and in the discussions about the impact on themselves, their peers/families and their significant others. You can do this by listening and talking to them about the planned work and how you will manage risks from COVID-19. The people who do the work are often the best people to understand the risks in the workplace, and they will have a view on how to work safely. Involving them in making decisions shows that you take their health and safety seriously.

As is normal practice, staff, volunteers and young people should be involved in assessing workplace risks and in the development and review of workplace health and safety policies in partnership with your organisation.

If your staff have access to external representation, such as a trade union, you should ensure they have suitable opportunities to support this process. Some members of your team may have more than one role (paid or voluntary) and consideration should be given to the risks they may experience and how these could impact their capacity to safely work for your organisation. Additional supportive measures may be appropriate to support their welfare. .

15.0 Managing risk

Organisations have a duty to reduce risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures. Organisations must work with all other employers and contractors (e.g. nurseries) sharing the delivery location or workplace so everyone's health and safety is protected. A collective agreement should be put in place for shared spaces to outline each party's role and responsibilities. In the context of COVID-19, this means working through these steps in order:

1. Increasing the frequency of handwashing and surface cleaning in every delivery location or workplace. Where handwashing facilities are not available, ensure adequate provision of hand sanitiser.
2. Organisations should make every reasonable effort to comply with the social distancing guidelines set out by the government [here](#).
3. Consider the security implications of any changes you intend to make to your operations and practices in response to COVID-19 as any revisions may present new or altered security risks that could need mitigation.
4. Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full for a particular activity, organisations should consider whether that activity needs to continue, and if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between staff and/or young people.

Further mitigating actions include:

- Keeping the activity time as short as possible.
- Deliver activity outdoors; whilst preparing premises for future use, when it is safe and practical to do so.
- Using screens as barriers to separate people from each other.
- Using back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible – primarily in office environments.
- Reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering' (so each person works with only a few others).
- If sharing equipment between individuals, routine cleaning steps should be considered before the next person uses the item(s).

Finally, if individuals must work face-to-face for a sustained period with more than a small group of fixed partners (the same people), then you will need to assess whether the activity can safely go ahead. No-one is obliged to work or engage in youth activities in an unsafe work environment. You should ensure that your staff and service users are encouraged to raise concerns about safety and that they feel comfortable doing so.

In your risk assessment, you should have particular regard for whether the people doing the work are especially vulnerable to COVID-19 or if they are supporting people who might be.

If you have not already done so, you should carry out an assessment of the risks posed by COVID-19 in your delivery location as soon as possible. If you are currently operating, you are likely to have gone through a lot of this thinking already. We recommend that you use this document to identify any further improvements you should make. You should continually monitor, review and update your risk assessments with your local stakeholders (workers/volunteers, trade unions, young people and parents/carers and other appropriate parties).

16.0 Sharing the results of your risk assessment

You should share the results of your risk assessment with your stakeholders. If possible, you should consider publishing the results on your website (and we would expect all employers with over 50 workers to do so). Below, you will find a notice you should display in your premises to show you have followed this guidance.

Staying COVID-19 Secure in 2020

We confirm we have complied with the government's guidance on managing the risk of COVID-19

● FIVE STEPS TO SAFER WORKING TOGETHER ●

- ✓ We have carried out a **COVID-19 risk assessment** and shared the results with the people who visit and work here
- ✓ We have **cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures** in line with guidance
- ✓ We are following national guidance by the **National Youth Agency** in consultation with **Public Health England** and the **Health and Safety Executive**
- ✓ We have taken all reasonable steps to **maintain current social distancing** requirements
- ✓ Where people cannot socially distance, we have done everything practical to **manage transmission risk**

Leader _____ Date _____

Who to contact: _____ Your Health and Safety Representative
(or the Health and Safety Executive at www.hse.gov.uk or 0300 003 1647)



17.0 Protecting people who are at higher risk

Youth organisations often work with young people and trusted adults (staff, volunteers) who are at higher risk from COVID-19. It is essential to be aware of who these individuals are and how to mitigate the risk to them. Steps may be required to ensure equality of access to provision for young people who are shielding or at increased risk.

Points to be aware of:

- Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals (see definition in Appendix 1) who have been strongly advised not to leave the home other than in isolation or with one other family member and only to go outside.
- Clinically vulnerable individuals who are at higher risk of severe illness (e.g. people with certain pre-existing conditions, see definition in Appendix 1) and have been asked to take extra care in observing social distancing. These people should be helped to access youth provisions. For clinically vulnerable workers, this may mean deployment to alternative duties for a period.
- If clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) individuals need to attend sessions, they should be offered the option of the safest available on-site roles/activities, enabling them to stay socially distanced from others. If there are times they can't be socially distanced from others, you should carefully assess whether this involves an acceptable level of risk. You must consider specific activities for those with protected characteristics, e.g. expectant mothers. Particular attention should also be paid to people who live with clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.
- Organisations should consider the concerns expressed by any staff who consider themselves to be at higher risk, which may include those from vulnerable groups or those from ethnic minorities, and continue to pay special attention to and support all with protected characteristics

18.0 How to raise a concern

There may be occasions where concerns persist, such as concerns about unsafe practices, safeguarding, risk management, behaviour and social distancing (please note this is not an exhaustive list). You should be able to find support via the following routes:

- Contact your line manager, an employee representative or your organisations volunteer support team.
- Contact your national association or body.
- Contact the board of trustees or executive for your organisation.
- Contact your trade union if you have one.
- Use the HSE form available at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm>
- Contact HSE by phone on 0300 003 1647.

Things to consider

- Understanding and considering the particular circumstances of those with different protected characteristics.
- Involving and communicating appropriately with staff and young people whose protected characteristics or needs (SEND, BAME, young carers, etc.) might expose them to a different degree of risk or might make any steps you are thinking about taking inappropriate or challenging for them.
- Deciding if you need to put any particular measures or adjustments in place to fulfil your duties under the equality's legislation.
- Making reasonable adjustments to avoid disabled staff and young people being put at a disadvantage and assessing the health and safety risks for new or expectant mothers.
- Making sure that the steps you take do not have an unjustifiable negative impact on some groups compared to others, for example, those with caring responsibilities or those with religious commitments.

19.0 Accidents, security and other incidents

It is essential to prioritise safety during incidents and to follow your standard health and safety policies and procedures.

Things to consider

- In an emergency, for example, an accident, provision of first aid, a fire or a break-in, people do not have to stay socially distanced if it would be unsafe. If giving first aid or assistance to someone suspected of COVID-19, the first-aider should be encouraged to contact the NHS test and trace service.
- RIDDOR reporting advice should be followed for the reporting of relevant COVID-19 information.
- People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay particular attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards, including washing their hands.
- Reviewing your incident and emergency procedures to ensure they reflect the social distancing principles as much as possible.
- Organisations should keep a log of near misses and incidents and review this log to continually improve practices locally.
- Should a worker/volunteer or young person become unwell during a session, standard welfare measures should apply. If you suspect COVID-19, encourage them to contact the NHS test and trace service: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>
 - This includes individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19 as well as those who live in a household with someone who has symptoms and those who are advised to self-isolate as part of the government's test and trace program
- When preparing an action plan and risk assessment, organisations should consider the behavioural and welfare needs of young people. A clear process/plan to address any risks should be communicated to all staff/leaders within sessions.

20.0 Managing people

All youth sector organisations need to take the requirement to minimise the contact resulting from visits to centres/units seriously. Sessions should only open when your action plan and risk assessments mean you are satisfied that you can safely socially distance and minimise risk to vulnerable groups. The youth work support website has templates and checklists to support your decision-making process.

Things to consider

- Limiting the number of individuals in delivery spaces (indoors or outdoors), overall and in any congestion areas, e.g. doorways between outside and inside spaces.
- Encouraging staff and young people to use hand sanitiser or handwashing to reduce the risk of transmission.
- Looking at how people walk through your premises and how you could adjust this to reduce congestion and contact between staff and young people, e.g. queue management or a one-way flow where possible.
- We know many people are also keen to return to or contribute to volunteering. Organisations have a duty of care to volunteers to ensure as far as reasonably practicable that they are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. This guidance for working safely during the COVID-19 pandemic should ensure that volunteers are afforded the same level of protection of their health and safety as employees and the self-employed.
- Ensuring any changes to entries and exits and any queue management systems to outdoor locations and facilities and to consider reasonable adjustments for those who need them, including disabled staff, young people and visitors.
- Managing outside queues to ensure they do not cause a risk to individuals or other businesses.
- Continuing to keep café/coffee bar spaces closed until further notice, apart from when offering hot or cold food to be consumed off the premises. Organisations are permitted to open these services in line with government guidance for high street café's and restaurants.
- Individuals who are advised to stay at home under [existing government guidance](#) do not physically come to work/sessions. This includes individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19 as well as those who live in a household with someone who has symptoms.
- Employers must not knowingly require or encourage someone who is being required to self-isolate to come to work.

21.0 Cleaning

Before reopening, make sure that any site or location that has been closed or partially operated is clean and ready to restart, including:

- An assessment for all sites, or parts of sites, that have been closed before restarting work.
- Cleaning procedures and/or providing hand sanitiser before restarting activity.
- Completing a deep clean if the premises have been closed for a long duration.
- Considering risks from legionella and taking precautions.

Keeping the workplace clean is essential for preventing transmission via contaminated surfaces. If your premises are shared with other organisations/contractors, a collective agreement should be put in place to outline each party's role and responsibilities.

Things to consider

- Frequent cleaning of work areas and equipment between uses using your usual cleaning products.
- Frequent cleaning of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, e.g. kitchens and sports and ICT equipment.
- Clearing workspaces and removing waste and belongings from the work area at the end of a session.

If you are cleaning after a known or suspected case of COVID-19, refer to the specific guidance.

Organisations will need to ensure good levels of hygiene are maintained, this includes handwashing, sanitation facilities and toilets. Additional Public Health England advice on cleaning non-healthcare settings can be found [here](#).

Things to consider

- Using signs and posters to build awareness of good handwashing technique, the need to increase handwashing frequency, avoiding touching your face and coughing and sneezing into a tissue that is binned safely or into your arm if a tissue is not available.
- Providing regular reminders and signage to maintain hygiene standards.
- Providing hand sanitiser in multiple locations in addition to washrooms.
- Setting clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean and that social distancing is achieved as much as possible.
- Enhancing cleaning for busy areas.
- Providing hand drying facilities with either paper towels or electrical dryers.

22.0 Face coverings

In England, face coverings are now required by law to be worn in most indoor public settings (shops, supermarkets, indoor transport hubs, indoor shopping centres, banks, building societies, post offices and on public transport). Most young people and workers (since 24 September 2020) aged 11 years and over (from the day of their 11th birthday) are required to wear a face covering indoors, including within community and youth centres. Please see the latest face covering guidance [here](#).

NB: Although at Step 3 it has been confirmed that school pupils will no longer be recommended to wear a face covering at school, this exemption does NOT apply to community based youth sector activity, The use of face coverings remains a requirement (unless with valid exemption) for all young people and leaders/volunteers 11yrs of age or over.

Please be mindful that there are valid exemptions for some individuals and groups to not wear a face covering in these settings.

Please be mindful that the wearing of a face covering may inhibit communication with people who rely on lip reading, facial expressions and clear sound. Face shields are allowed, but provide significantly less protection from COVID19 and are not encouraged.

Why you should wear a face covering: Scientific evidence

Coronavirus (COVID-19) usually spreads by droplets from coughs, sneezes and speaking. These droplets can also be picked up from surfaces, if you touch a surface and then your face without washing your hands first. This is why social distancing, regular hand hygiene, and covering coughs and sneezes is so important in controlling the spread of the virus.

Evidence shows that when used correctly, wearing a face covering may reduce the spread of coronavirus droplets in certain circumstances, helping to protect others.

Because face coverings are mainly intended to protect others, not the wearer, from coronavirus (COVID-19) they are not a replacement for social distancing and regular hand washing. It is important to follow all the other government advice on coronavirus (COVID-19) including staying safe outside your home.

If you have recent onset of any of the most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), you and your household must isolate at home: wearing a face covering does not change this. You should arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19:



- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of smell or taste (anosmia)

When is a face covering not required?

- Young people aged 10yrs (up to the day before their 11th birthday) or under
- All outdoor activities are exempt, although the NYA recommends that you should wear a face covering if social distancing isn't possible
- When eating or drinking, although when preparing food they should be worn
- Playing team sports in large open indoor spaces (sports hall)
- Individuals who are exempt and unable to wear a covering. More guidance from [gov.uk is available here](#).

What counts as a face covering?

- A cloth face covering
- Medical mask (similar to those used by dentists)
- Plastic face shield (these are less effective at preventing infection)
- Venues must remind people to wear face coverings where mandated

23.0 Personal protective equipment (PPE)

PPE protects the user against health or safety risks at work. If you were already using PPE in your work activity to protect against non-COVID-19 risks, you should continue to do so. This may be the case for supporting young people with personal care needs.

PPE in the context of this guidance refers to **medical grade PPE** (surgical face masks, visors etc). Other forms of PPE, such as that used when cooking, cleaning or during specific outdoor or craft activities, should continue to be worn as per health and safety advice.

When managing the risk of COVID-19, additional PPE beyond what you usually wear is not beneficial. This is because COVID-19 is a different type of risk to the risks you normally face in a workplace and needs to be managed through social distancing, hygiene and fixed teams or partnering, not through the use of PPE.

Organisations should not encourage the precautionary use of extra PPE to protect against COVID-19 outside clinical settings or when responding to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19. This is the official guidance from Public Health England.

Unless you are in a situation where the risk of COVID-19 transmission is very high, your risk assessment should reflect the fact that the role of PPE in providing additional protection is limited. If your risk assessment shows that PPE is required, however, you must provide this PPE free of charge to the workers who need it. Any PPE provided must fit properly. An example of this may be face masks provided to staff when travelling with young people or to and from meetings using public transport.

Things to consider

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on and after removing it.
- When wearing a face covering, avoid touching your face or face covering as you could contaminate them with germs from your hands.
- Change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you have touched it after putting on.
- Continue to wash your hands regularly.
- Change and wash your face covering daily.
- If the material is washable, wash in line with the manufacturer's instructions. If it is not washable, dispose of it carefully in your usual waste.
- Practise social distancing wherever possible.

24.0 NHS test and trace service

The NHS has established a new Test and Trace Service which youth sector providers need to be aware of.

The government is asking cafes, restaurants and social venues where individuals are onsite (inside or out) to record attendance information for the purposes of contacting individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19.

There is new guidance from the Department for Health and Social Care here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works?priority-taxon=774cee22-d896-44c1-a611-e3109cce8eae>

What should you be doing?

The following information on all leaders and young people (over 16) in attendance must be captured (unless they have 'checked in' using the NHS COVID-19 app) or are unable to provide these details owing to a health reason or disability:

1. Name
2. Phone number on which the individual may be contacted
3. Email address if the individual is unable to provide a phone number
4. Postal address if the individual is unable to provide an email address
5. Date and time of entrance (shift times of staff must also be captured and where possible departure time or estimated departure time of young people should be captured)
6. If a young person will only interact with one member of staff, this should be recorded alongside the name of the young person.

For those under 16, the contact details of their next of kin can be captured as good practice.

IMPORTANT: This information should be kept securely for 21 days and then destroyed if not captured as part of your standards registration processes.

The following information provided by the Office of the Information Commissioner should be followed and attendees made aware of your participation in the test and trace scheme.

Office of the Information Commissioner Statement on the Guidance Clear simple steps for businesses to take Coronavirus dedicated web hub.

25.0 NHS test and trace QR codes

Most public youth sector venues are required (from the 24th September 2020) to display a QR code linked to the NHS Test and Trace mobile app. All venues need to apply for a venue specific QR code which can be applied for online and will be emailed to you shortly after. QR codes are only provided for your venue, you do not need different codes for each session provided. Use of the NHS Test and Trace app is only applicable for over 16yrs.

Click here to apply for your venues code: https://www.gov.uk/create-coronavirus-qr-poster?fbclid=IwAR0_Ek2X30Ihul-VrUkr5qAhfSp7cD72tamv7z kf1BJWLFyZ_GzDBn5Pd4Y

NB. If you use a third parties' venue, please ask them to ensure a QR code is provided. Codes are provided for each address not user group.

Get visitors to scan the QR code when they arrive, using the NHS COVID-19 app. This is to help trace and stop the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

You should create and display a QR code if you are:

- Community Centres
- Youth and Community Centres
- Village Halls

If you have more than one venue, you need to create a separate QR code for each location. You can add multiple locations in the service.

To register for a QR code you will need:

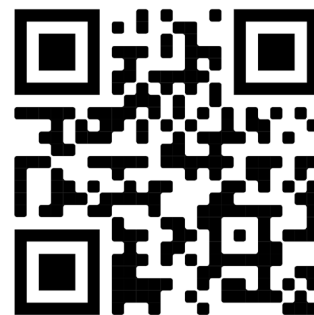
- Your email address
- The address of your business, place of worship, community organisation or event

If you have more than one venue, you will also need:

- the address of each location
- an email address for the manager (or point of contact) for each location
- a phone number for the manager (or point of contact) for each location

Getting your QR code

You'll receive your QR code poster by email soon after you have submitted your information. If you have more than one location, the manager (or point of contact) for each location will also receive a unique QR code poster by email.



What to do when you receive your QR code

When you receive your QR code poster (by email) you should:

- print the poster
- display the poster somewhere visitors can see it and scan it when they arrive, for example next to the entrance
- ask visitors to scan the QR code when they arrive, using their NHS COVID-19 app
- display as many posters as you need to, to avoid queues forming

If you do not have a printer, you can show the QR code on a display screen, such as a TV or tablet. Make sure it's within reach so visitors can scan it with their mobile phones.

Help and support

For more information on creating a QR code for your venue, [visit the NHS website](#).

If you have problems using this online service, call the QR code support service.

QR code support

Telephone: 0800 540 4900

Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm



26.0 Communications and training

It is essential to make sure all staff, volunteers, young people and visitors understand the COVID-19-related safety procedures put in place. The decisions made during the creation of the local action plan and risk assessment need to be communicated. This must be done in an easily understandable way that will be understood by all in attendance.

Things to consider

- Providing clear, consistent and regular communication to improve understanding and the consistency in ways of working.
- Engaging with staff, volunteers and young people through existing communication routes to explain any changes in working arrangements.
- Ideally develop clear communication and training materials for workers prior to them returning to site, especially regarding any new procedures for arriving at work.
- Awareness and focus on the importance of mental health at times of uncertainty. The government has published guidance on the mental health and wellbeing aspects of coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Explaining guidelines using images and clear language that considers groups for whom English may not be their first language.
- Using visual communications, e.g. whiteboards and signage, to explain changes to programmes, activities or opening times to reduce the need for face-to-face communications.
- You will need to recognise that materials may need to be provided in different languages and formats to support accessibility. Also, those with additional needs may need support to access information. This should be provided.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers have been inducted and trained in any new procedures or requirements following your risk assessment. Keep this under continual review.

27.0 Waste disposal

When disposing of face coverings and PPE, people should do so in a 'black bag' waste bin or litter bin. Face coverings or PPE should not be put in a recycling bin or dropped as litter.

Organisations should provide extra bins for staff and customers to dispose of single-use face coverings and PPE and should ensure that staff and customers do not use a recycling bin.

People who are self-isolating, and members of their household, should double bag face coverings and items of PPE, these should be stored for 72 hours before being disposed of in a 'black bag' waste bin. Full details on how to dispose of your personal or business waste during the coronavirus pandemic can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Note: The key points of the waste disposal guidance that your updates should reflect are:

- People should dispose of face coverings and PPE in a 'black bag' waste bin or litter bin. People should not put face coverings or PPE in a recycling bin or drop them as litter.
- People who are self-isolating, and members of their household, should double bag face coverings and items of PPE to be disposed of, and store them for 72 hours before putting them in a 'black bag' waste bin.
- Businesses should provide extra bins for staff and customers to throw away face coverings and PPE and should ensure that staff and customers do not use a recycling bin.

Appendix 1. Definitions

Vulnerable young people

There are two groups of vulnerable young people. The first is defined by the Department for Education as any young person or child in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, any young person with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) under the Children and Families Act 2014 or any child or young person who has been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities.

The second group has a broader definition, with the focus being on supporting and safeguarding vulnerable young people, particularly 8–19-year-olds, through adolescence and the key stages of transitioning to adulthood. They are understood to be children and young people living in vulnerable family situations and includes those not known to formal or statutory services.

We recognise that young people have other vulnerabilities and difficulties, and some may have needs that have been amplified by COVID-19. This can result in risky behaviours and crisis points in their lives. Support for the vulnerable young people who are most in need should be a priority consideration for services and support during the COVID-19 pandemic. See the NYA's 'Out of Sight?' report for examples.

Risk and safeguarding assessment

Before commencing delivery, a comprehensive risk assessment must be completed that should, at the minimum, ask:

- Is there a need for this activity to take place? Could this work happen through other means?
- How will the proposed activity be managed safely? What are the ratios of staff/young people? How will disclosures be managed?
- How will social distancing guidelines be applied?
- Are there health risks to young people or staff/trusted adults that should be considered?
- Is PPE appropriate or needed (for personal care reasons, etc.)?
- Will the activities proposed ensure safe practice?

Enhanced risk assessment

An enhanced risk assessment builds on the risk and safeguarding assessment and also factors in the physical premises involved and any additional risks they may pose to the staff or public.

Safe spaces

Safe spaces are locations or premises where youth sector activities can take place. This will often be the buildings used to house your projects or activities. Safe spaces can also be outdoor spaces, such as camp sites and residential centres.

Recommended PPE

For most youth activities, PPE (above mandatory face coverings) will not be required except for staff working in close contact for welfare or safeguarding reasons. Otherwise, social distancing guidelines must be observed, which results in the minimal effectiveness of PPE. This advice may change at any time. PPE should be used in line with Public Health England's guidance.

Hand sanitation

Handwashing facilities must be available. Additionally, hand sanitising gel can be provided.

Clinically extremely vulnerable

Clinically extremely vulnerable people will have received a letter telling them they are in this group or will have been told by their GP. Guidance on who is in this group can be found [here](#).

Clinically vulnerable people

Clinically vulnerable people include those aged 70 years or over and those with certain underlying health conditions. All members of this group are listed in the 'clinically vulnerable' section [here](#).

Detached youth activity

Activity which takes place away from traditional youth sector premises that is informal in nature. Youth workers visiting the local park or shops to engage with young people on their own terms.

Appendix 2.

Where to find support

The following websites may provide additional support:

The NYA has teamed up with UK Youth and the Federation for Detached Youth Work to provide further support, tools, checklists and model risk assessments: <https://youthworksupport.co.uk>

UK Government coronavirus website: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

The Health Protection (Coronavirus) (England) Regulations 2020: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/coronavirus>

The Department for Education guidance can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>

Further guidance for young people can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/stay-alert-and-safe-social-distancing-guidance-for-young-people/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing-guidance-for-young-people>

Public Health England; Disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/891116/disparities_review.pdf

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

Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19: <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>

Staying at home and away from others (social distancing): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): safer travel guidance for passengers: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) general COVID-19 website: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/coronavirus.htm>

HSE working safely during the coronavirus outbreak guidance: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/working-safely-during-coronavirus-outbreak.htm>

Guidance on social distancing for young people: [https:// www.gov.uk/government/publications/stay-alert-and-safe-social-distancing-guidance-for-young-people/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing-guidance-for-young-people](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/stay-alert-and-safe-social-distancing-guidance-for-young-people/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing-guidance-for-young-people)

Travel Advice for Coronavirus: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>

Staying secure during COVID-19 <https://www.cpni.gov.uk/staying-secure-during-covid-19-0>

National Council for Voluntary Organisations coronavirus webpage: <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/practical-support/information/coronavirus?carousel>

Coronavirus Work Rights | UK Advice for Coronavirus from Unite: <https://unitetheunion.org/campaigns/coronavirus-covid-19-advice/>

Coronavirus: your rights at work from Unison <https://www.unison.org.uk/coronavirus-rights-work/>

Appendix 3. Legal statement

The National Youth Agency (NYA) does not provide this document to the sector in anything less than 'guidance'. NYA takes no responsibility for how users of this document interpret or apply the guidance. Users of this guide must ensure they operate within the law, social distancing guidelines and meet their specific duties and responsibilities to stakeholders. It is for each organisational unit to make its own local decisions on how to apply the advice included. NYA cannot be held accountable for local decisions reached based on this guidance. Organisations must ensure they have suitable action plans, risk assessments and be self-satisfied that they have considered all reasonable actions to protect the welfare, health and safety of staff, volunteers, employees and service users.

This guidance does not supersede any legal obligations relating to health and safety, employment or equalities and it is important that as an organisation, charity, local authority or an employer you continue to comply with your existing obligations, including those relating to individuals with protected characteristics. This document contains non-statutory guidance to consider when complying with these obligations.

When considering how to apply this guidance, consider agency workers, contractors and other people, as well as your employees and service users/young people. To help you decide which actions to take, you need to carry out an appropriate COVID-19 risk assessment, just as you would for other health and safety hazards. This risk assessment must be done in consultation with unions or workers.

This guidance document has been drafted with the support of Public Health England and the Health and Safety Executive. Users should ensure they are using the most up-to-date version of this document and can check this at any time via the NYA website. www.nya.org.uk


This guidance document has been provided to allow the youth sector to draw its own conclusions as to the nature of safe youth activity and appropriate levels and types of activities at any given time.




National Youth Agency

www.nya.org.uk

 [@natyouthagency](https://twitter.com/natyouthagency)

 nya@nya.org.uk

 0116 242 7350

Registration No. 2912597 | Charity No. 1035804

National Youth Agency, 9 Newarke Steet, Leicester LE1 5SN