



COVID-19 RESUMING GB COMMUNITY GROUP ACTIVITIES Handbook 2020

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide a framework to support local GB Community Group leaders to decide on resuming activities in a safe and consistent way.

The National Youth Agency (NYA) as the Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body for youth work in England has, in consultation with Public Health England and the Health and Safety Executive, developed youth sector specific advice and guidance to support you in remaining safe when engaging in activities. You should ensure that you have read the recommendations and requirements in their document '[Managing youth sector activities and spaces during COVID-19](#)'.

Our framework and guidance are designed to be complimentary to the NYA and other any national statutory and government advice and guidance and is specific for the work of Girls' Brigade Ministries local uniformed community groups operating across England and Wales. This is additional guidance in response to COVID-19 and is in addition to the guidance that should be followed for safe practice contained in [Life to the Full](#).

Different arrangements are in place in England and Wales and you must ensure that you follow statutory and national guidance from Public Health England or Public Health Wales appropriate to your location on social distancing, travel and other measures for COVID-19; youth work or social gatherings as well as specific guidance from church denominations for youth work. In the event that local lockdown measures are imposed where your GB group meets you must follow the local measures put in place. Information on local restrictions can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-restrictions-areas-with-an-outbreak-of-coronavirus-covid-19>.

You will also need to maintain awareness of your own church and any denominational guidance they are following.

Links to government and denominational guidance can be found in Annexe A.

Safeguarding measures in line with Life to the Full continue to remain in place and you should ensure that you are aware of how to respond to disclosures and of who key safeguarding contacts for your group and church are.

This document will be updated as guidance changes. Please visit the resources pages on the GBM Website regularly for updates and check [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) or [gov.wales](https://www.gov.wales) websites for advice on current social distancing guidelines and measures.

All Team Leaders and District Team Leaders are expected to read this guidance.

FRAMEWORK FOR RESUMING GB ACTIVITIES

The framework for resuming GB activities needs to be flexible and able to respond to changes in the national Alert level for youth work and government measures in place for COVID-19, which may be applied differently in England and Wales and in some cases across regions within England. GB Groups must not resume face-to-face activities until at least September and then only if the appropriate Readiness Level has been reached and group sizes are adhered to.

We know that circumstances for all of our volunteer leaders are different, some may have been front line workers, others may be shielding, and we know that this may impact on your timescales for resuming face to face activities.

When volunteers feel ready to resume face-to-face activities, the following key principles will apply:

- Social distancing must be maintained
- Hygiene and handwashing levels maintained including enhanced cleaning arrangements
- Risks to staff, volunteers and members can be managed
- Safeguarding measures can be met
- Decision to resume face-to-face activities **must be taken in conjunction with your local church**
- GBM COVID-19 Checklist must be signed by your church and approved by GB Support Centre before the group resume face-to-face activities.
- You should communicate your plans to reopen your GB group with parents and carers and share with them the steps you have put in place to ensure the safety of their children and volunteers.
- You should only resume face-to-face activities once you feel safe to resume activities and sufficient measures are in place and the GBM COVID-19 Checklist has been signed off by your church and the GBM Support Centre.

The reasons for this are to avoid any unnecessary risk to GB's volunteer leaders, members and their families and the wider church community to which the group belongs.

The checklist will need to be revisited each time the Readiness Level changes as each level may require different steps to be put in place to reduce the risk to volunteers and members. If your risk assessment for Amber Readiness has been approved by the GB Support Centre, there is no need to resubmit this for approval when Readiness Levels change.

Activities will be resumed in line with the NYA's readiness levels.

Readiness Level	GBM Activities
Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face-to-face activity is suspended • Online meetings and use of GB@home or posted/hand delivered resources • Risk assessments must be in place for online meetings
Amber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups can meet indoors or outdoors once confirmed by GBM Support Centre • Day trips and visits may take place • Social distancing must be maintained • A full risk assessment including building risks must be completed • Readiness checklist sent to GBM Support Centre for authorisation with copy of risk assessment • May need to shorten sessions or meet in fixed smaller groups on more than one evening or alternate evenings for onsite activities • An adapted programme for use in groups and at home will be provided by GBM
Yellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger fixed groups can meet indoors or outdoors • Multiple concurrent sessions can take place if space permits • Social distancing must be maintained • A full risk assessment including building risks must be completed • Readiness checklist sent to GBM Support Centre for authorisation with copy of risk assessment • May need to shorten sessions or meet in fixed smaller groups on more than one evening or alternate evenings for onsite activities • An adapted programme for use in groups and at home will be provided by GBM
Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities return to normal • Residential events and visits permissible • International travel allowed within FCO advice

PLANNING AND RISK ASSESSMENT

Leaders within GB have a duty of care to the children and young people who attend their activities, whether this is via online methods, face-to-face activities inside or outside or at residential or other external events. You should always follow the guidelines and procedures for safe practice in GBM activities. The team leader has a responsibility to make regular risk assessments of the premises in relation to the activities that will be undertaken and record these using templates available in the *Delivering an Evening's Programme Toolkit* which is available in the resource zone of the GBM website. However, additional measures will need to be put in place to manage the risk presented by COVID-19 and an additional risk assessment including enhanced health and hygiene and premises risks will need to be undertaken using the COVID-19 addendum to the above toolkit and the residential event toolkit.

These should be adapted to your local setting in particular you should consider, handwashing arrangements, how you will maintain social distancing, managing arrivals and departures, which activities it will be safe to undertake, cleaning and other hygiene measures, if there are leaders and/or young people who are in 'vulnerable' groups for COVID-19 and what impact this might have on staff ratios and the measures you may need to put in place to reduce risk.

You will need to consider how you can ensure equality of access to GB for young people who are shielding or at increased risk because of the virus. This may be via online provision or enabling access to weekly programme materials.

You should discuss and share your risk assessment with the GB group leadership team, including any Young Leaders, and your Church leadership. Once you are sure that all risks have been assessed you will need to submit a copy of your *Delivering an Evening's Programme Toolkit* with completed risk assessment with the GBM COVID-19 Checklist to the GB Support Centre, before resuming any face-to-face activities. You should also ensure that you communicate with parents and carers of your group members your plans to resume activities.

You should keep your *Delivering an Evening's Programme Toolkit* risk assessment under regular review and update as required but especially if the Readiness levels or government guidance changes.

Further information around risk assessments in relation to youth work can be found in section 6 and 7 of the [NYA guidance](#).

SOCIAL DISTANCING

At all times you should take steps to ensure that social distancing as outlined can be maintained during activities.

- In England this is currently recommended at 2 metres. 1 metre plus should only be considered if additional measures such as screens, back-to-back working and face coverings can be put in place
- In Wales you should stay 2 metres (3 steps) away from others when outdoors and in enclosed spaces outside the home setting. For young children (those of primary school age or younger), it's less essential to attempt to rigidly maintain continual 2 metre distance between them, or between the children and any adults outside their household or extended household. Care should be taken to encourage children to follow hand hygiene measures and keep close contact to a minimum wherever possible.

To maintain social distancing, you may need to make changes to your activities or mark out distances on the floor or space tables so that the children and young people can maintain their distances.

It is important that leaders, including Young Leaders, understand the need for social distancing measures and avoiding direct contact with the children and young people attending GB's local community groups, eg hugging or holding hands.

FIXED GROUPS

Group size and composition e.g. fixed group definition will be determined by the additional guidance determined by the appropriate NYA Readiness level for England and by the Welsh Government guidance for youth activities. Please note that any local or regional changes put in place to manage the spread of COVID-19 would take precedence.

At Amber readiness level in England and Wales the following applies:

- Group size should be
 - In England outdoors there are no limits on group size
 - In England indoors there are no limits on groups made up of under 18s ie those who were 17 or under on 31.8.2020
 - In England indoors there are limits of 15 plus leaders for groups of 18 or overs or groups that are made up of under and over 18 year olds
 - In Wales outdoors groups should be in no more than 30 PLUS leaders
- Groups are fixed for the day
- Individuals should stay in their allocated group. Leaders may move between fixed groups if required to safeguard young people, manage behaviour or provide assistance. This should be avoided if possible.
- No more than one fixed group in a space
- Fixed groups should not join together
- It's advisable to have siblings in the same fixed group and leaders with their own children/ family members, if applicable, and where possible. You may have to be flexible for a few months to work with different age groups to those you'd be with usually. Where young people are in different age sections then discuss with parents if they're happy for them to work in separate fixed groups or wish them to be in the same fixed group
- Young leaders can help with younger children or be in their own age section - but they can't do both on the same day
- Remember that safeguarding still needs to be taken into consideration
- Shared spaces, such as kitchens etc., must be deep cleaned thoroughly between use if different fixed groups are to use them on the same day (sequentially)
- You must deep clean rooms between sequential groups but ideally you should adapt your group to avoid sequential groups meeting in the same space

SHIELDED AND CLINICALLY VULNERABLE MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS

Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals, those with serious underlying health conditions which put them at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus have been advised to rigorously follow shielding measures to keep themselves safe. For members and volunteers in this position they should be advised not to attend face-to-face activities.

You should also consider those individuals who are classed as vulnerable, due to age or to underlying health conditions.

Things to consider

- How to ensure equality of access to GB activities, eg what alternative ways can you use to ensure continued engagement with members through regular updates and provision of badgework resources that can be carried out at home.
- Ensure volunteers are kept up to date on plans, are there roles they could carry out safely from home eg ordering of uniform or badges
- If volunteers do not feel safe to return to face-to-face activities do you have sufficient ratios of adults to young people to carry out your weekly activities
- Encourage involvement in online activities

In the event of an incident GBM's health and safety guidance should be followed. In an emergency, for example an accident requiring first aid or a fire, you do not have to stay 2 metres apart if this would be unsafe.

CLEANING

Key things to consider are:

- Ensuring frequent cleaning of work areas and equipment between activities
- At least 30 minutes of cleaning should be carried out between groups, if they're using the same space
- Frequent cleaning of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly eg door handles, light fittings
- Clearing away and removing waste and belongings at the end of a session. Waste should be placed in a bin liner and put into the dustbin at the end of the session. It should only be retained for 72 hours in the event of a known or suspected case of COVID-19 within your group
- Cleaning at the end of the session
- In the event there has been a known or suspected case of COVID-19 within your group you should refer to the specific government guidance for cleaning [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings)

FACE COVERINGS

Please be aware that some individuals and groups have reasonable excuses for not wearing a face covering due to age, health or other conditions which aren't always visible.

Government advice is that because face coverings are mainly intended to protect others, not the wearer, from COVID-19 they're not a replacement for social distancing and regular hand washing. It is important to follow all the other government advice on COVID-19

HYGIENE MEASURES

You will need to ensure good levels of hygiene are maintained this includes frequent handwashing and hygiene in toilets.

Things to consider are:

- Reminding young people of good handwashing technique, avoiding touching their faces, coughing, or sneezing into a tissue (and binning this safely)
- Providing hot soapy water or hand sanitiser at entry and exit points
- Setting out the use and cleaning guidance for toilets so that they are kept clean and social distancing can be maintained
- Providing paper towels or hand dryers for drying hands

Whilst we would not expect our leaders to need to wear PPE for normal GB activities, the use of disposal gloves is recommended for cleaning.

COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

Anyone who is experiencing symptoms associated with COVID-19, has tested positive for COVID-19, or is legally required to quarantine, having recently visited countries outside the common travel area should be advised to follow the government guidance around testing, self-isolation and registering with the government track and trace system. They should not attend activities whilst they are isolating.

Any member or volunteer who has a member of their household with COVID-19 symptoms should be encouraged to follow the government guidance around testing, self-isolation and registering with the government track and trace system. They should not attend activities whilst they are isolating.

Anyone who becomes ill during the group meeting with COVID-19 symptoms should be sent home and advised to follow COVID-19 guidelines. Whilst awaiting collection, they should be asked to wait in a room where they can be isolated, if necessary, with adult supervision and ensuring that social distancing is maintained. If their health gives cause for immediate concern, the emergency services should be contacted.

If a member of a fixed group is confirmed as positive for COVID-19, members of the group may be contacted by the government track and trace team who will offer advice. Leaders will only be contacted by Track and Trace for contact details if they feel that someone who has tested positive has had close contact with members of a fixed group.

However, if the group leader becomes aware that a member is confirmed as positive for COVID-19, all members of the fixed group should be alerted and advised to contact track and trace for a test if they experience any COVID-related symptoms.

TRACK AND TRACE

Following the launch of the NHS COVID-19 app and changes to legislation if you have your own venue you now need to provide a printed QR code for the venue to enable those 16 years and over to use the NHS Track and Trace app. You can generate a unique code at www.gov.uk/create-coronavirus-qr-poster?fbclid=IwAR0_Ek2X30lhul-VrUkr5qAhfSp7cD72tamv7zkfIBJWLfYz_GzDBn5Pd4Y.

If you are using a church or other venue that you do not own, it is the responsibility of the venue to create and display the QR code.

GB groups should continue to maintain a register of attendance for all those attending face to face activities.

GIRLS' BRIGADE ACTIVITIES – ADDITIONAL THINGS TO CONSIDER

Arrivals and Departures

- Consider how social distancing will be maintained as parents drop off and collect their children and young people.
- Do you need to use separate doors for arrivals and departures?
- Do you need to mark out 2 metre distances?
- How will you safely collect subs – could you move to half termly/termly collection through bank transfer to reduce risk from handling money or ask that subs are brought in a sealed envelope and left for 72 hours before opening.
- How will you maintain your register of those attending?

In order to support the NHS Track and Trace service, the government is asking cafes, restaurants and social venues where individuals are onsite (inside or out) for more than fifteen minutes to record attendance information for the purposes of contacting individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19.

For all activity that lasts more than fifteen minutes in duration you should capture the following information on all leaders and young people in attendance:

1. Name
2. Phone number of next of kin, or the individual if over 16
3. Email address for next of kin, or the individual if over 16
4. Date and time of entrance and exit

Visitors who do not remain onsite for more than fifteen minutes do not need to be recorded.

This information should be contained in your annual consent forms, but you should check that you have consent forms for all children, young people and leaders.

Craft, Colouring, paper activities

- You will need to ensure that you have enough paper, craft items and equipment for each child to have their own
- Consider creating individual activity packs for each activity you plan to undertake
- You should ensure any equipment is cleaned at the end of the session

Cooking

- Cooking activities should not take place unless the Readiness Level is at Green

Snacks, drinks, and tuck

- Snacks and drinks should not be offered unless the Readiness Level is at Green
- Children and young people should be encouraged to bring in their own bottled water clearly labelled with their name. This should be taken with them at the end of the evening or drinks in sealed cartons could be provided. Please ensure you wear protective gloves when handing out drinks
- Tuck should only be offered if it can be purchased in pre-sealed bags and you will need to consider how money can be collected safely.

Games

- You will need to consider what games can be delivered whilst maintaining social distancing, currently 2 metres.
- Further information on games that can be adapted can be found on the GBM Website resources section
- We do not recommend parachute games or catching games where it is not possible to maintain social distancing rules or items are passed between children and young people.

Devotions

- Consider how you will maintain social distancing rules
- Holding of hands for prayers, etc should be discouraged
- Singing of worship songs should not take place

Travel

- Leaders and members should be encouraged to walk or cycle to the venue. Where this isn't possible then they should use public transport or drive.
- It's mandatory to use a face covering when using public transport.
- You should also ensure that you maintain social distancing in cars and minibuses. This might mean that you're unable to use some seats in minibuses to maintain 2 metre distance. All drivers and passengers should wear a face covering.
- All measures should be included in your risk assessment.
- If social distancing measures can't be maintained, you should consider whether this is an activity that can be sustained.
- All vehicles should be thoroughly cleaned after use.

Communicating with Parents

You should ensure that before undertaking online activities or resuming face-to-face activities parents are fully aware of what activities will be undertaken and what measures have been put in place to ensure the safety of their child.

Consider how you will communicate e.g. through email, newsletter or perhaps an online meeting, the measures that will be in place, particularly when you resume face-to-face meetings. You may need to discuss alternative arrangements for paying subs, explain how you will maintain social distancing upon arrival and departure and what this means for parents and what measures you will be putting in place to ensure safety whilst activities are taking place.

APPROVAL TO RESUME FACE-TO-FACE / ONSITE ACTIVITIES

Before resuming activities in line with the Readiness levels you will need to take the following steps:



ANNEXE A – LINKS TO GOVERNMENT AND DENOMINATIONAL GUIDANCE

National Youth Agency COVID-19 Guidance

<https://nya.org.uk/guidance/>

Welsh Government COVID-19: Guidance to support youth work services with a safe phased increase of operations

<https://gov.wales/youth-work-services-guidance-coronavirus>

Specific government and statutory guidance can be found here:

UK government advice

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

UK Government advice on social distancing

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

UK Government guidance on local restrictions

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-restrictions-areas-with-an-outbreak-of-coronavirus-covid-19>

Welsh government guidance

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

Welsh government advice on social distancing

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-social-distancing-guidance>

FAQs in relation to organised children's activities in Wales

<https://gov.wales/organised-childrens-outdoor-activity-frequently-asked-questions#section-67305>

Denominational guidance can be found here. Please consult this as relevant to your group:

The Baptist Union

https://www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/338267/Essential_Guidance.aspx

The Church of England

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches>

The Methodist Church

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/coronavirus/official-guidance/>

United Reformed Church

<https://urc.org.uk/coronavirus.html>

Other guidance:

Guidance for team sports

<https://londonsport.org/covid-19/return-to-sport-and-physical-activity-guidance/>

ANNEXE B – GBM COVID-19 CHECKLIST

COVID-19 Checklist – Part One

Part One of the Checklist only should be completed, signed and emailed to the GBM Support Centre (gbc@gb-ministries.org) together with your group meeting risk assessment. The GBM Support Centre will confirm approval of your checklist within 10 working days.

If you are uncertain about any aspects of this checklist and risk assessment, then please seek advice from the GB Support Centre.

GROUP NAME _____

TEAM LEADER NAME _____

Stage One	Completed
Group Leadership team have met to review plans to reopen and review and risk measures to be put in place	
Plans and risk assessment have been discussed with the Church leadership or venue management	
The Programme and evening timetable have been reviewed to ensure that social distancing measures can be maintained	
Will your group face-to-face meetings be held: One evening a week Across multiple evenings each week Alternate weeks Multiple consecutive groups each week (please highlight those that apply)	
Have additional cleaning and hygiene protocols been put in place	
Group risk assessment has been completed and enclosed with part one of the checklist	

Church confirms that it is

happy for this GB Group to resume activities on church premises from _____ (date)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name of Church Leader: _____

Position: _____

I confirm that the steps above have been completed and enclose my complete Group night risk assessment:

Signed: _____ Date: _____

For office use only:

Date received: _____

July 2020 (V1)

Approved by: _____

Date of approval: _____

ANNEXE B – GBM COVID-19 CHECKLIST

COVID-19 Checklist – Part Two

Approval and Communicating with Parents and members

Part Two of the Checklist should be completed once approval has been received from the GB Support Centre.

GROUP NAME _____

TEAM LEADER NAME _____

Stage Two	Completed
Approval received to open	
Parents have been contacted and briefed on plans to reopen the Group and assure them of the measures that have been put in place	
Where members are unable or unwilling to attend group meetings, for example, due to being in a vulnerable group, plans are in place to maintain contact and engagement	
Programme planning has taken place	
Stage Three	Completed
Plans are in place for the first night's meeting. Fun activities and opportunities to share experiences are planned Briefing on food hand hygiene, social distancing is given, appropriate to ages	
Recognition and celebration of awards achieved over past 12 to 15 months Ensure social distancing in place	
Brief young leaders on the part they play in ensuring protocols are maintained	
Review of arrangements has taken place following first meeting and adjustments made if necessary. There is no need to resubmit your risk assessments to GBM Support Centre if changes are made at this stage	

Remember to review your risk assessment and arrangements at regular intervals and as the government guidelines and/or the Readiness level is changed

Checklist completed by:

Name: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____



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GB Ministries is the operating name of The Girls' Brigade England & Wales;
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