



## **Woodcraft Folk Group Activities: Briefing for Groups in England, July 2021**

### **Overview**

In **England**, the government has announced the move to **Step 4** of its roadmap with effect from 19 July, and the **Yellow level** of the Youth Sector Readiness Framework still applies.

While international travel for youth work is still prohibited, all other approaches, including residential trips, are permitted, subject to measures to control the spread of Covid-19 infection.

Despite the lifting of restrictions, infection rates remain high in many parts of the country, particularly among young people who cannot yet access vaccinations. Even where activities are permitted within the guidance, groups are encouraged to undertake only those that they feel confident and comfortable delivering, with due regard to local conditions.

The continued requirement for individuals to isolate following exposure to a confirmed case of the Covid-19 virus means that groups should still take steps to limit the number of 'close contacts' young people and adults are exposed to during activities, in order to minimise disruption to families.

As always, if you are concerned about any of the young people in the group(s) you work with, please contact Woodcraft Folk's safeguarding team by emailing [safeguarding@woodcraft.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@woodcraft.org.uk) so we can discuss how we can best meet their support needs.

### **Key Changes at Step 4**

[Version 7 of the National Youth Agency's guidance](#) was published on 15 July outlining the restrictions on youth work activity at Step 4. This document should guide your planning for activities over the summer. Significant changes include:

- Activity for, or including, young people over 18 is now subject to the same rules as under 18s
- Removal of maximum group/bubble sizes for indoor, outdoor and residential activity
- Social distancing and the wearing of face coverings are no longer mandatory, but are strongly encouraged in particular situations

## **Managing Covid-responsible activities**

Previous guidelines for 'Covid-secure' activities have been replaced by the concept of 'Covid-responsible' provision. As a minimum you must ensure that the following are in place before you deliver face-to-face activities with young people:

- An action plan with clear roles and responsibilities for volunteers
- An up-to-date written risk assessment, shared with stakeholders
- Robust hygiene procedures, including frequent hand washing
- Cleaning of venues and equipment to prevent infection
- Face coverings worn where this is advised (e.g. on public transport or in poorly ventilated spaces)
- Distancing in poorly ventilated spaces, or as required to reduce close contact with others

While the capturing of 'Test & Trace' information is no longer required by law, you must continue to keep a record of young people and adults attending activities, as required by Woodcraft Folk's procedures to safeguard children and young people, and you should draw on this information in the event of a confirmed case.

## **Sessional Activities**

Group sessions and activity days can take place in indoor or outdoor venues, with groups of any size. Young people participating in the activities can be over 18, under 18 or a mixture of both, meaning that DFs can now join group activities without restriction.

If a participant subsequently tests positive for Covid-19 (within 48 hours of the activity), it will be necessary to advise people who were in close contact with the person who has tested positive to isolate (see Appendix), and to contact Test & Trace to enable them to identify adults and young people in close contact with the confirmed case.

You should still balance the benefits of activities carefully against the risk of transmission that is created by bringing people together, and pay particular attention to the situation in your local area. Suggested approaches include:

- using outdoor venues in preference to indoor ones
- increasing ventilation in indoor areas (by keeping doors/windows open and removing walls/sides of marquees)
- limiting the capacity of indoor spaces so a safe distance can be maintained
- reducing the duration of sessions
- running activities with the minimum number of volunteers required for safe and effective provision (all volunteers should have a clearly defined role)

- spacing out activity stations, and encouraging young people to work side-to-side or back-to-back, rather than face-to-face
- staggering arrival and departure times at sessions
- creating a one-way system, or designating different entry and exit points
- reducing sharing of equipment, or cleaning it between users

Groups are also advised to structure activities in such a way that close contacts of individual children and adults are (a) kept to an acceptable level, and (b) easily identifiable in the event of a suspected or confirmed case. Doing so will avoid the possibility of whole groups having to isolate. You could do this by:

- having young people work in consistent smaller groups, bubbles or clans
- having a sign-in sheet for activity workshops
- planning activities that avoid close contact (e.g. gathering under a parachute or huddling over a quiz sheet)
- running a 'carousel' of activities that young people can do in family/household groups
- maintaining a distance of 2m when bringing groups/bubbles together (e.g. between a group of Elfin's and a group of Pioneers at a shared campfire)

You should also make sure that volunteers and participants comply with any requirements or requests by your meeting venues regarding Covid procedures, e.g. checking in with the NHS app, adhering to one-way systems or wearing face coverings in public areas.

Social distancing and face coverings are no longer required by regulations, but are encouraged in poorly ventilated areas, where the risk of airborne transmission is higher. In particular, it is recommended that face coverings should be worn on public transport, shared minibuses and in private cars if informal or organised lift-sharing is taking place between households.

## **Camping & Residential Activities**

Advice given above on reducing transmission and limiting close contact should also be applied to camps and residential activities, and written into activity plans and risk assessments for such events. While the restrictions on numbers, and on mixing between different groups, have been lifted, a confirmed case on a large camp could impact a significant number of families, and it's therefore advised that larger camps are still organised in smaller villages or bubbles to mitigate this risk.

Due to the increased risk of transmission associated with indoor and outdoor residentials, additional restrictions apply to these activities at Step 4:

## **Occupancy of sleeping accommodation**

Tents, dormitories or bedrooms must be shared between a *maximum of six people* (whether young people or volunteers). In many venues this will reduce the overall capacity of the accommodation while restrictions remain in force.

These 'accommodation bubbles' should be kept consistent throughout the trip. They could also form the basis of clans or activity groups to further reduce the number of close contacts.

## **Lateral flow device testing**

Requirements for lateral flow testing remain unchanged from the previous guidance; adult volunteers and young people aged 11 and over should carry out tests:

- immediately before departure for a camp or residential
- every 48-72 hours while away
- on their return home

Test kits can be obtained free from community pharmacies, or ordered through local testing sites, or through the Test & Trace service, online or by calling 119.

Anyone testing positive before departure should not attend. Anyone testing positive via a lateral flow test, or developing symptoms of Covid-19 should immediately isolate from other participants and undertake a PCR test as soon as practicable. You will need to plan for how you will manage this if it occurs, and make parents/carers aware that they may need to collect their child at short notice.

## **Contingency planning**

In addition to planning for different scenarios involving either young people or volunteers testing positive during a residential activity, you should also bear in mind the possibility of a further change in local or national restrictions before the end of camp.

As restrictions ease, volunteers, young people and their parents/carers will have their own concerns about engaging with face-to-face provision, and you should be careful to consider these and address them in your activity planning. In particular you should be sensitive to the needs of volunteers and young members who are clinically vulnerable, and consider how best to support their needs. Online or remote programme activities may remain a valuable part of Woodcraft Folk's offer to young members during this time.

## **Appendix: Isolation Guidance**

A summary of isolation guidance for sessional and residential activities can be found below. Please see [woodcraft.org.uk/covid-19](http://woodcraft.org.uk/covid-19) for further information.

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## Sessional Activities (group nights and activity days)

	<b>Symptomatic</b>	<b>LFD test positive</b>	<b>PCR test positive</b>
Suspected case	Advise to arrange PCR test ASAP, isolate until results received	Advise to arrange PCR test ASAP, isolate until results received	Isolate as directed by Test & Trace
Close contacts (same bubble)	Advise to isolate until PCR test results from suspected case received	Advise to isolate until PCR test results from suspected case received	Advise to isolate and arrange PCR test ASAP *
Others	Advise to take LFD test	Advise to take LFD test	Advise to take LFD test every 48 hrs for 10 days from exposure

## Camps & Residentials

	<b>Symptomatic</b>	<b>LFD test positive</b>	<b>PCR test positive</b>
Suspected case	Arrange PCR test ASAP, isolate <i>on camp</i> until results received	Arrange PCR test ASAP, isolate <i>on camp</i> until results received	Return home ASAP, isolate as directed by Test & Trace
Close contacts (including same tent/dorm)	Take LFD test, isolate <i>on camp</i> until results from suspected case received	Isolate <i>on camp</i> until results from suspected case received	Return home ASAP, advise to isolate and arrange PCR test ASAP *
Others	Remain on camp, continue to take LFD test every 48 hours	Remain on camp, continue to take LFD test every 48 hours	Remain on camp, continue to take LFD test every 48 hours

\* Once a positive PCR test is confirmed, the group leader should contact Test & Trace to share details of close contacts. Test & Trace will confirm who is required to isolate and for what period on the basis of the information supplied.

Symptoms or positive tests on return from camp should be treated as for sessional activities.