



Woodcraft Folk Group Activities: Briefing for Groups Leaders, September 2021

Overview

Further easing of restrictions has taken place in all three nations of the UK where Woodcraft Folk groups operate. However, rates of Covid-19 infection, and the lack of a vaccination programme for under 16s, mean that it is still important to ensure that Woodcraft Folk activities do not contribute to the spread of the virus.

Many legal restrictions have been removed altogether, but some measures are still required or strongly advised:

- Limits on numbers **gathering indoors and outdoors** have been removed in all three nations
- The wearing of **face coverings** is still required in most indoor spaces in Scotland and Wales, although not in England
- **Distancing** is no longer legally required in England, Scotland or Wales, although it is still advisable to maintain distance where possible, particularly indoors
- **Self-isolation** of positive cases is still vital to controlling the spread of infection - appropriate government guidance should be followed to address the risk of close contacts of a positive case developing illness
- **International exchanges** are now possible, subject to any controls in place in the partner nation(s) - but should be undertaken only with written approval from [Woodcraft Folk's Chief Executive](#)

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 so we can discuss how we can best meet their support needs.

England

[Version 8 of the National Youth Agency's guidance](#) was published on 6 September outlining current restrictions and advice on youth work activity in England. While restrictions have been relaxed, all activities should be planned in line with 'Covid-responsible' guidelines.

Scotland

As Scotland ended the system of Protection Levels on 9 August, the YouthLink Scotland Guiding Framework for youth work was withdrawn, and groups should now follow government [advice for community learning & development settings](#).

Camps and residentials must be delivered in line with the guidance for [school and youth trips](#).

Wales

Alert Level 0 has been in force across Wales since 7 August. [Guidance for businesses and organisations](#) published by the Welsh Government applies to voluntary sector organisations such as Woodcraft Folk. This is also supported by specific [guidance for the childcare and playwork sector](#).

Sessional Activities

As a minimum, all groups should ensure that the following are in place before they 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 required
- Distancing in poorly ventilated spaces, or as required to reduce sustained close contact with others

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 and provide to the relevant contract tracing service.

Risks of transmission at Woodcraft Folk activities can be reduced effectively by measures such as:

- using outdoor venues in preference to indoor ones where practical
- increasing ventilation in indoor areas (by keeping doors/windows open)
- limiting the capacity of indoor spaces so a safe distance can be maintained
- reducing the duration of sessions
- running activities with only the 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
- having young people work in consistent smaller groups, bubbles or clans

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.

When considering how you will plan your activities you should consider any factors that increase risks to your group, and increase mitigation measures as required. These may include:

- volunteers or young members who are clinically vulnerable
- higher infection rates in your local area
- young members who attend a wide range of schools
- very large or mixed-age groups

In **England** face coverings are no longer compulsory (though are required by local bylaws in some circumstances, e.g. on public transport), but are strongly advised in indoor venues where it is not feasible to ventilate the space and/or maintain distancing

In **Scotland** (for those aged 12 and over) and **Wales** (age 11 and over), face coverings are still required in most enclosed public spaces, and so should be worn during indoor sessions, unless medical or other exemptions apply..

Camping & Residential Activities

The sustained contact between participants in a residential or overnight activity means that further measures are required to run activities safely. In addition to the above, young people (aged 11+) and adults should take lateral flow 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 online through the gov.uk website.

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.

Limits on numbers of people sharing sleeping spaces (tents or dormitories) during residential activities no longer apply to youth work activity.

Responding to Positive Cases

If a young member or volunteer becomes unwell with Covid-19 symptoms at, or within 48 hours of, a Woodcraft Folk activity, they should seek a PCR test as soon as possible. If a positive test result is confirmed:

- they should not attend further activities and isolate for the next 10 days
- group leaders should identify close contacts of the individual within the group, and advise them to seek a PCR test and isolate
- information on close contacts should be provided to the relevant NHS contact tracing service (Test & Trace in England, Test & Protect in Scotland, and Test, Trace, Protect in Wales)

Isolation periods *may* be waived on the instruction of NHS contact tracing services (e.g. for those who are fully vaccinated), subject to a negative PCR test result.

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