

COVID-19 Secure Policy and Procedures

The Outdoor Education Sector guide to regulations and recommendations for 'COVID Safe' reopening of Residential Education Centres

28 October 2020

Overview

This document sets out the framework for opening residential outdoor education centres and provides a basis for individual providers to add their own operating guidance for customers, staff, and supply chains in their own venues as necessary.

It is not intended to be exhaustive in covering every possible scenario but aims to provide a clear direction for the residential outdoor education sector to adopt best practice and meet the government guidance on working safely during coronavirus.

The document has been developed in full partnership with significant outdoor sector organisations and representative bodies and will be reviewed on a monthly basis or more frequently if changes in legislation or guidance requires it.

- Association of Heads Outdoor Education Centres <https://ahoec.org/>
- British Activity Providers Association www.thebapa.org.uk/
- Institute of Outdoor Learning www.outdoor-learning.org/
- Adventure Activities Industry Advisory Committee www.aaiac.org/
- Outdoor Education Advisers Panel www.outdooreducationadvisers.co.uk/
- The Outdoor Council www.englishoutdoorcouncil.org/
- Scout Adventures www.scoutadventures.org.uk/

Each year millions of children and young people undertake outdoor activities and outdoor learning opportunities, with many participating in residential outdoor visits. These experiences are widely recognised as contributing to the education, welfare and personal development of those children and young people, by:

- developing interpersonal skills
- enhancing self-confidence and mental well being
- positively contributing to academic attainment
- sparking a life-long interest in healthy outdoor activities

The nationwide network of residential outdoor education centres enables children and young people to access activities and developmental experiences that most schools cannot provide. For many schools, the residential visit to these centres are much more than the meeting of the Outdoor Adventurous Activity element of a curriculum, they build trust and understanding between teachers and pupils and constitute a key element of the school year.

GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE: ESSENTIAL READING

The Government* has provided 14 guides for working safely during coronavirus covering a range of different types of work. This guidance draws upon 8 of these:

[1] Five Steps to working safely

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/5-steps-to-working-safely>

[2] Hotels and other guest accommodation

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/hotels-and-other-guest-accommodation>

[3] Providers of grassroots sport and gym/ leisure facilities

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/providers-of-grassroots-sport-and-gym-leisure-facilities>

[4] Restaurants, pubs, and takeaway services

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/restaurants-offering-takeaway-or-delivery>

[5] Shops and branches

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/shops-and-branches>

[6] Vehicles

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/vehicles>

[7] The visitor economy

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/the-visitor-economy>

[8] Offices and contact services

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres>

9. Construction and other outdoor work

10. Factories, plants, and warehouses

11. Heritage locations

12. Other people's homes

13. Performing arts

14. Labs and research facilities

For specific guidance on School Transport and Social Distancing for Schools this publication draws upon the DfE published guidance on reopening Schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

Providers are directed to consider any additional restrictions that may be in force due to local restrictions.

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

*The UK Governments have produced guidance on how to work safely in a COVID-19 environment. It is updated regularly and whilst taking a slightly different approach they are very similar in terms of protocols.

Providers must ensure their operating procedures meet the latest guidance

For England

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

For Wales

<https://gov.wales/keep-wales-safe-work>

For Scotland

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-returning-to-work/>

For Northern Ireland

<https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-workplace-safety-guidance-and-priority-sector-list-published>

Re-opening Guidelines

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-reopening>

COVID-19 Secure Policy Statement [1]

The provider will have Covid-19 secure policy statement making a clear commitment to provide a safe and healthy environment and outline the intentions and approach to manage the risk of Covid-19 transmissions. This is shared with staff and guests to ensure both parties understand their obligations

COVID-19 Risk Assessment [1]

The provider will undertake a Covid-19 risk assessment to protect people from harm. This includes taking reasonable steps to protect your workers and others from coronavirus

The provider must:

- identify what work activity or situations might cause transmission of the virus
- think about who could be at risk
- decide how likely it is that someone could be exposed
- act to remove the activity or situation, or if this is not possible, control the risk

In addition to the sector's well established approach to H&S and staff development through monitoring and compliance, these Covid19 specific requirements will be added to the provider's monitoring activity

School Transport

Based on government guidance to support schools fully open from the beginning of the autumn term.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

- Schools are directed to the latest government guidance on travel which removes the need to implement 'social distancing' measures on dedicated transport.
- Schools are advised to consider:
 - how pupils are grouped together on transport, where possible this should reflect the bubbles that are adopted within school
 - use of hand sanitiser upon boarding and/or disembarking
 - additional cleaning of vehicles
 - organised queuing and boarding where possible
 - distancing within vehicles wherever possible

- the use of face coverings for children (except those under the age of 11), where appropriate, for example, if they are likely to come into very close contact with people outside of their group or who they do not normally meet
- Transport operators contracted by the provider will confirm in writing that they conform with latest government guidance

General Management [1] [2] [4] [5] [7] +

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

The provider will ensure:

- Occupancy levels form part of the provider's Risk Assessment to ensure government guidance can be implemented
- The Schools social distancing 'bubble (s)' is maintained and contact with others avoided by:
 - Allocating accommodation and adopting procedures to ensure schools avoid contact with other users.
 - Ensuring pupils remaining in their 'bubble' for all activities
 - Designating each 'bubble' an area within the dining room and setting mealtimes
 - Designating times for each 'bubble' to use facilities such as shops
- Prior to arrival, schools will have a clear understanding of the role they play in managing the risk of Covid, this includes promoting and monitoring of good personal hygiene and ensuring social distancing is maintained where necessary
- Upon arrival Schools will:
 - Confirm that and everyone on the visit is in good health and not showing any signs of Covid-19
 - Receive a comprehensive briefing highlighting their responsibilities
 - Be reminded of the importance of good personal hygiene and their obligation to report any illness to the provider
- Pupils will have either:
 - Ensuite toilet and shower facilities avoiding the need to interact with other pupils or schools
 - Assigned toilet and shower facilities which are cleaned at frequent intervals using an anti-viral disinfectant

- Physical meetings are limited to essential purposes only and social distancing principles enforced, these will be outdoors or in well-ventilated rooms
- Car parks are defined and controlled to ensure all traffic and vehicle movement is managed to minimise congestion
- Contractors and visitors are limited to essential services only, and that their operations are aligned with the Government's 'Covid-19 Secure' guidance.
- Fire risk assessments are reviewed to ensure they remain effective and comply with guidance on social distancing, adjusting where necessary 'fire assembly points' to maintain social distancing
- Legal compliance with statutory requirements for Legionella, fire safety, gas safety and electrical testing

Facilities [1] [2] [4] [5] [7]

The provider will ensure:

- The number of people permitted in each building at any one time has been calculated to ensure social distancing can be maintained in line with the current government guidance, signage is provided at each entrance to illustrate the maximum numbers and highlight expectations
- That where surfaces require disinfecting, we will use an antiviral disinfectant that is effective against Coronavirus; certified to European standards BS EN 14476 and BS EN 1276
- Hand sanitiser is available at the entrance to all buildings, and must be used by everyone entering the premises to reduce the risk of transmission
- Adequate hand washing facilities or sanitiser are provided at other key locations
- Markers will be in place to help staff and guests maintain social distancing wherever there is a need to queue
- Signage will be placed in prominent areas to remind everyone to maintain social distancing and wash their hands regularly
- One-way flows will be introduced where necessary to assist in maintaining social distancing
- Locations with a potential for congestion (dining room entrance) will be supervised by an adult to ensure that social distancing guidance is adhered to
- Doors, and windows will be open as much as possible unless they are designated fire doors

- Additional cleaning and sanitising will take place in areas of high congregation and frequent touch points/surfaces such as:
 - Door handles / push plates, especially in and around WCs, dining rooms, communal offices, receptions, vending machines
 - Entrances to buildings, classrooms, and accommodation corridors
 - Accommodation - light switches, bedside tables, taps, flush handles and toilet seats, door handles – inside and out, access control pads where fitted, ladders and rails, heater controls.
- Appropriate cleaning supplies will be readily available for staff and accompanying visitors to enable easy access for 'self-service' cleaning
- Moveable soft furnishings that could harbour the Covid virus will be removed
- Furniture will be arranged to allow social distancing
- Toilet facilities provided for visitors will allow for users to maintain social distancing and cleaning materials will be provided to allow 'self-cleaning'
- Bins will be non-touch for the disposal of PPE, tissues etc.

Staffing [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8]

The provider will ensure that the Local Safeguarding Partnership Key Standards and DfE guidelines for recruitment are adhered to and that all Staff undergo an induction, training, and assessment programme

Staff:

- Will undergo comprehensive training in preventing the transmission of Covid, washing hands, cleaning, hygiene, social distancing, and the use of PPE
- Have staggered arrival and departure times at work to prevent crowding into and out of the workplace. More entry points have been provided.
- Are health checked every morning and reminded daily only to come into work if they are well and no one in their household is self-isolating
- Where social distancing cannot be maintained, instructors will follow government advice and wear the appropriate protective equipment, all Instructors will be supplied with a 'face shield' and a 'face covering' for use at the appropriate time
- Are made aware of their obligation to report any illness and are reminded of the importance of good personal hygiene

- Are split into dedicated work teams where possible to keep the number of members interacting with others as small as possible, reducing the risk of transmission and allowing the provider to deliver in the event of one or more teams needing to self-isolate
- Are encouraged to take precautionary measures and will wear a face covering if using public transport
- Are kept updated and regularly monitored on all procedures
- Will have a change of clothes/spare uniform available for when required e.g. after dealing with virus or bodily fluids
- Will avoid using hot desks and spaces, where this is not possible, cleaning, and sanitising workstations will be undertaken between different occupants

Accommodation [1] [2]

The sector's provides a wide range of accommodation and wherever possible, within the constraints of accommodation type, the following standards are adopted:

- All premises, rooms, equipment, and resource provision are suited to the task, well maintained and are in accordance with statutory requirements
- There are separate male and female sleeping areas and separate bathroom facilities for mixed groups
- Sleeping areas are lit and have appropriate ventilation.
- There is space for the storage of luggage and clothes under beds or in cupboards, drawers, and shelves
- Separate sleeping accommodation is provided for party leaders accompanying a group
- Party leaders have access to their group's accommodation at all times.
- Campsites:
 - Tents will be spaced to allow access for emergency vehicles and additional support social distancing
 - Shared campsite toilets and showers will be well ventilated and cleaned at frequent intervals using an antiviral disinfectant

Measures to mitigate the spread of Covid:

- Rooms will be cleaned and sanitised prior to occupancy in accordance with the procedures outlined in the providers housekeeping manual and health and safety procedures
- Beds should only be occupied in shared dorms where social distancing can be achieved
- All Linen is laundered at 60 degrees
- Guest keys will be sanitised with a disinfectant before arrival
- Each room will be inspected and approved for use by a member of the Housekeeping Management team
- To reduce the risk of transmission, rooms will only be cleaned during the stay at the request of the occupants

Activities [1] [3] [7]

Providers will have developed Operating Standards for all activities which outline the qualifications, training, equipment, and procedures required to deliver a safe experience

These standards are endorsed by a relevant Technical Expert and reviewed on an annual basis or as and when required due to developments in equipment, best practice or as a result of incidents within the sector

Measures to mitigate the spread of Covid:

- Programmes are modified to ensure activities can be conducted to adhere with social distancing guidelines and prevent any interaction with other schools
- Activities that normally take place indoors should be replaced or moved outside where possible
- Activities will be conducted in accordance with the guidance issued by the Governing Bodies of Sport and Industry sector bodies where relevant
- The need for guests to share equipment will be minimised
- Providers will ensure strict maintenance of hand hygiene using hand sanitiser before, during (where appropriate) and after activity
- Providers will have a clearly defined disinfecting routine in place to disinfect relevant equipment and contact surfaces before, after and at pre-set intervals as defined in activity risk assessment. Where equipment cannot be disinfected it will be quarantined for 72 hours before being re-issued

- Rescues - If a close 'contact' rescue is necessary, the instructors will use a method that avoids 'face to face' situation or use the appropriate PPE

Catering [1] [2] [4] +

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-food-businesses/guidance-for-food-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

Providers are inspected by the Local Authorities

Measures to mitigate the spread of Covid;

Providers will ensure:

- Staff and guests are aware of the procedures to be followed
- Face coverings are worn at all times by staff and guests except when seated at a table to eat or drink. Permitted exceptions include children under the age of 11 and people who cannot put on, wear, or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability
- The dining room will be clearly physically marked to ensure guests can follow a safe one-way queuing system that adheres to the latest advice regarding social distancing
- Dining will be organised to minimise:
 - Customer self-service of food, cutlery, and condiments to reduce the risk of transmission
 - The number of surfaces touched by both staff and customers
- Chairs, tables, and any other touch points will be sanitized between groups visiting the dining room
- Sterile cutlery, crockery and paper serviettes will be provided to guests over the food counter

Infection Control

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maintaining-records-of-staff-customers-and-visitors-to-support-nhs-test-and-trace>

- Providers will have procedures in place to manage any suspected infection which includes the use of designated rooms suitable for isolation whilst awaiting collection
- The provider's policy outlines the action to be taken in the event of someone (staff, guest, visitor) showing signs of Covid-19 including engaging with the NHS Track and Trace service and ensuring schools notify providers of any post visit infections
- If a guest is displaying signs of the Covid-19 virus they will immediately self-isolate to minimise any risk of transmission and request a test. If they are confirmed to have Covid-19, they will return home if they reasonably can
- If a guest cannot reasonably return home (for example because they are not well enough to travel) their circumstances will be discussed with an appropriate health care professional and, if necessary, the local authority.
- If we have a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 then we will enact the government guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings
- Providers staff are available to assist with any support and repatriation requirements
- First Aiders have been provided with additional training in accordance with the Resuscitation Council UK Covid-19 guidance on CPR and resuscitation. The appropriate PPE is available in order to maintain an effective response to any incidents

Additional Sector Guidance

- http://www.theoia.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/OIA-Hostels-Covid-19-Reopening-Guide_10-small.pdf
- <http://www.bhhpa.org.uk/covid19hs/>
- <https://www.ukhospitality.org.uk/general/custom.asp?page=coronavirus>
- <https://www.resus.org.uk/covid-19-resources/covid-19-resources-general-public/resuscitation-council-uk-statement-covid-19>
- <http://www.vertex-training.co.uk/docs/VIGReopeningv3.pdf>
- https://www.abcwalls.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Climbing-Centres-Covid-19-Reopening-Guide_07b-Public.pdf