

## Coronavirus: Children's, youth and families ministry

Version Most recent first	Changes
27 January 2022	Guidance re-written reflecting the gradual lifting of restrictions and the expectation that we learn to manage COVID-19 sensibly and indefinitely.

### Contents

1. Sources
2. Government headlines/news
3. Safeguarding

# 1. Sources

This guidance is based on a number of Government guidance documents.

## **UK Government**

[Coronavirus: How to stay safe and help prevent the spread](#)

[Protective measures for holiday and after-school clubs, and other out-of-school settings](#)

[Actions for early years and childcare providers](#)

[Guidance for parents and carers of children attending out-of-school settings](#)

[Interactive map](#)

## **Welsh Government**

[Alert level 2: guidance for the public](#)

[Alert level 2: frequently asked questions](#)

[Childcare and play: frequently asked questions](#)

[Guidance for childcare and playwork: coronavirus](#)

[Interactive map](#)

## **You may also find the following BUGB guidance helpful:**

[Coronavirus: Guidance on re-opening Baptist church buildings](#)

[Coronavirus: Guidance on church worship](#)

[Coronavirus: safeguarding considerations for Baptist churches](#)

## **Further websites that may be useful**

[National Youth Agency](#)

## 2. Government headlines/news

### England

As of 27 January 2022:

- The UK Government says, "COVID-19 will be a feature of our lives for the foreseeable future, so we need to learn to live with it and manage the risk to ourselves and others."
- Though legal requirements remain in place regarding self-isolation, all legal requirements regarding the size and type of gatherings have been removed. Notably, face coverings are no longer mandatory in education or youth settings.
- The UK Government continues to recommend taking voluntary measures to limit the spread of COVID-19, such as encouraging vaccination; ventilating spaces or meeting outdoors; wearing face coverings in crowded and enclosed spaces when with people you do not normally meet; regular lateral flow testing; limiting close contact with people you do not usually live with; careful hygiene; and being mindful of those who are vulnerable.

### Wales

As of 28 January 2022:

- Face coverings are still a requirement indoors in public spaces including church buildings, for those not exempt. This applies to adults and children aged 11 and over.
- There is no requirement to maintain 2m social distancing.
- There is no limit on the number that may meet for any purpose outdoors. Indoors, there is no limit for organised activities for those under 18.
- The Welsh Government continues to recommend taking voluntary measures to limit the spread of COVID-19, such as encouraging vaccination; ventilating spaces or meeting outdoors; regular lateral flow testing; limiting close contact with people you do not usually live with; careful hygiene; and being mindful of those who are vulnerable.

### 3. Guidance

The UK population is now being asked to get used to living with COVID-19 for the foreseeable future.

Through 2020 and 2021, our guidance was concerned with minimising risk. This was partly to protect the children, young people, staff and volunteers in our churches from COVID-19, and partly as an act of care for the communities in which each church sits.

In the light of being asked to think how we live with COVID indefinitely, we feel the priority is shifting back so that we are free again to focus on recovering, growing or sustaining the work with children and young people to which God is calling us. This has to be done sensibly, bearing in mind the ongoing risk of COVID-19. Yet it might be appropriate now to review or reaffirm your vision for children, youth and families. How might this vision be pursued, whilst still acting in ways that sensibly offer protection to those you work with?

Of course, risk assessments for your events and activities should still be completed with COVID-19 in mind. Below you will find a list of factors we recommend that you consider. Nevertheless, we suggest that this risk management takes into account the ongoing call of Christ to his church to make disciples.

**Risk assessments for supervised children's and youth activities** might consider whether it will remain beneficial to:

- Keep a record of all who attend each group on any one date.
- Ventilate the building if possible, or moving activities outside if practical.
- Remind people that anyone with COVID-19 symptoms or who is self-isolating should not attend. This includes anyone who receives a positive test, develops symptoms, or has been a close contact of someone with COVID-19 when they themselves are unvaccinated. In both England and Wales, those who are fully vaccinated or under-18 do not have to self-isolate after close contact with someone who has tested positive. Instead, they are expected to test regularly for a number of days. Please see each Government's self-isolation guidance for more information.
- Maintain a careful hygiene routine for your buildings, especially for those areas commonly touched such as handles and switches.
- Encourage use of face coverings (even when not mandatory) when moving around buildings shared with other users.
- Encourage and provide for regular hand washing or sanitising.
- Limit singing to well-ventilated spaces where singers can be some distance from each other, and avoid loud singing.

**Risk assessments for parent and child groups** might consider whether it will remain beneficial to:

- Keep a record of all who attend each group on any one date.
- Make clear that families should not attend if they or anyone in their household has COVID-19 symptoms.
- Clean the floor, touch points, chairs, tables and toilets before and after each session, using a tick list to make sure nothing is forgotten.
- Organise families arriving and leaving such that there is space for each to 'unpack' at the start and prepare to leave at the end.
- Keep windows open for ventilation even as doors are closed for security.
- Serve any refreshments from behind a counter rather than having a self-service area.
- Avoid sharing soft toys.
- Pre-prepare craft packs rather than offering a craft table where all items are shared.
- Provide wipes and sanitizer for cleaning shared items such as trampoline handles, or so that parents can clean toys before passing them to children.
- Quarantine any toys after the session for 72 hours before they are used again.

The factors to consider are illustrative rather than exhaustive. We recommend you consider them and other mitigations in the context of your buildings; the type of activities you are running; the presence or absence of vulnerable people; the interaction between those attending your activity and others in the vicinity; and the infection rates in your area at any one time.

Ministries Team  
This version: 27 January 2022

This is one of a series of Guidelines that are offered as a resource for Baptist ministers and churches. They have been prepared by the Baptist Union of Great Britain and are, of necessity, intended only to give very general advice in relation to the topics covered. These guidelines should not be relied upon as a substitute for obtaining specific and more detailed advice in relation to a particular matter. The staff at the Baptist Union of Great Britain at Baptist House will be very pleased to answer your queries and help in any way possible.

Contact Address and Registered Office:  
Baptist Union of Great Britain, Baptist House, PO Box 44, 129 Broadway, Didcot, OX11 8RT  
Telephone 01235 517700 email [ministries@baptist.org.uk](mailto:ministries@baptist.org.uk) website [www.baptist.org.uk](http://www.baptist.org.uk)  
Registered Charity Number: 1181392, operating as a CIO  
First Issue 9 July 2020; restructured 15 April 2021; re-written July 2021; re-written 27 January 2022