COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions for Community Groups

(Information correct as of 23rd September 2020)

Is there a rule of 6 exemption for lunch clubs?

The Government guidelines list what are considered to be support groups that are exempt from the rule of 6. Lunch clubs (or similar) are not included in this list, therefore we would consider them to fall under the category of formal social groups that are not exempt from the rule of 6.

The guidance states that managers and providers in community facilities are not permitted to organise or hold informal or formal social groups, clubs and activities unless limited to groups of six people following social distancing rules.

However, the guidance also states for activities and social groups where there is a significant likelihood of groups mixing and socialising (and where it will be difficult to prevent mingling and therefore breaking the law) should not take place in a community facility. These may include but are not limited to:

- formal or informal clubs and hobby clubs (e.g. women's institute, veteran's associations, freemasons, sewing clubs, book clubs, crafts clubs, reading groups)

Any lunch clubs that take place following a full risk assessment need to also:

- Register the service with Lewisham's Food and Safety Team (Environmental Health Service) https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/business/food-safety/food-business-registration. David Edwards (head of environmental health) will be able to offer further advice.

We suggest that the duration at the luncheon club should be minimised as much as possible and that the risk assessment covers that the only people that touch the plate/cutlery etc are the cook and the meal recipient.

What are the rules for performances in faith settings?

Performances in faith settings should follow the Performing Arts Guidance.

For performance during worship (and rehearsals), both indoors and outdoors those performing in:

- a professional capacity; and
- those under 18 where supervised,

are not limited in number.

In all other cases, where the number of adult performers will be greater than 6, each group of up to 6 performers should ensure that they do not mix and that appropriate social distancing requirements are observed.

Singing should be limited to the performers, and worship should not include congregational singing.

Places of worship should take account of the Performing Arts guidance which outlines additional mitigations such as good ventilation. A comprehensive list of Performing Arts Guidance Criteria can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts

Where music plays a big part in worship, and recordings are available, we suggest you consider using these as an alternative to live singing to mitigate risks.

Any instrument played during worship should be cleaned thoroughly before and after use.

Avoid playing music at a volume that makes normal conversation difficult or that may encourage shouting when people will be trying to converse before or after worship.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july#section4

Do faith settings have to display QR codes for the NHS Test and Trace app?

The NHS COVID-19 app was launched on Thursday 24 September in England and Wales, including QR check-in at venues. QR codes will be an important way for NHS Test and Trace in England to contact multiple people if coronavirus outbreaks are identified in venues

You should create and display a QR code if you are:

- a business, place of worship or community organisation with a physical location that is open to the public
- an event which is taking place in a physical location

If you have more than one venue, you need to create a separate QR code for each location. You can add multiple locations in the service.

Details on how to register and create a QR code can be found on https://www.gov.uk/create-coronavirus-qr-poster

Is there any guidance for cleaning in outdoor settings?

Owners and operators are advised to implement cleaning protocols to limit coronavirus transmission in public places. It is advised that high traffic touch points should be particular areas of focus for increased cleaning.

This could include having cleaning regimes for areas such as:

- handrails
- entry and exit points such as gates
- seating areas such as benches
- refuse areas/bins

As a minimum, frequently touched surfaces should be wiped down twice a day, and one of these should be at the beginning or the end of the working day. Cleaning should be more

frequent depending on the number of people using the space, whether they are entering and exiting the setting and access to handwashing and hand-sanitising facilities.

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

Is there an exemption for a "Community Fun Day"

The rule of six means that groups of more than six are not allowed to mingle indoors or outdoors. There are a few exemptions to this rule, however a Community Fun Day does not fit the criteria for exemption.

The full list of exemptions can be found at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing#rules-in-other-venues-and-activities

Rule of 6 exemption for volunteers in food banks?

Community facilities are currently able to open for essential voluntary activities and urgent public services, such as food banks, homeless services, and blood donation sessions. Any provision should be conducted in line with the core principles of social distancing.

The rule of 6 applies to social gatherings and the exceptions where groups can be larger than 6 people include: for work, or the provision of voluntary or charitable services.

Volunteering at food banks meets this criteria and therefore be exempt from the rule of 6.

The size and circumstance of the premises will determine the maximum number of people that can be accommodated while also facilitating social distancing. In defining the number of people that can reasonably follow 2 metres distancing (or 1 metre with risk mitigation), the total floorspace as well as likely pinch points and busy areas should be taken into account (e.g. entrances, exits) and where possible alternative or one-way routes introduced.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing

Do children in out of school provision need to maintain bubbles?

Providers of out of school services should adhere to social distancing measures and, wherever required split children into groups. Deciding on group sizes is based upon:

- Current government guidance on social distancing
- Ability of the children in attendance to maintain social distancing and practice hand hygiene
- The age of children in attendance
- The nature of activity or provision
- The size of the premises

There should be a written or electronic list of the children in each group and any adults they have been for at least 21 days for Test and Trace purposes

There are, of course, challenges to keeping children in the same groups in out of school settings, in particular in “drop-in” services and activities. Providers must aim to keep children in the same groups, but where this is not possible use their best judgement in creating and frequently reviewing groups in order to minimise the amount of mixing.

Full information on protective measures for out of school settings can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-measures-for-holiday-or-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-for-children-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/protective-measures-for-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak