



4 Premises and Venues

Now that groups can meet again, there are many things to consider for your premises and venues. This Guidance Sheet offers some initial thoughts regarding this topic.

What's the current challenge?

Restrictions mean that groups are looking more and more at their outdoor spaces to see if they are able to operate outdoors. A lot of community spaces have been closed during the pandemic and may even have closed permanently. Some community centres and halls will be looking to limit the number of groups that can meet within or around their building.

Management committees will want to track who is coming in and out and will be developing their own protocols. Many young parents may not be vaccinated and have children attending schools or nurseries where they don't have to socially distance, this may make a venue manager more nervous about potential covid outbreaks.

Some venues will have to carry out a deep clean throughout all areas as they may have not been used for over a year. Whilst others may even have unwanted four legged visitors to re-locate before opening up!

Therefore, we must be aware that venues may want to start off slowly. Taking some time to put assurances in place and sharing those with the venues may help your group to be chosen to be one of the first in.

Policy Review

In the first instance, it will be important for your group to look at your existing policies and make sure they are still fit for purpose considering the change in landscape. Record your review and note down any changes you need to make. Some of these changes could be an addendum to the existing policies rather than a change as you will be hoping to get back to the originals as soon as possible.

You might choose to do a new risk assessment where many of the potential risks and fears can be noted and actions put in place to mitigate them.

Adjustments that could be considered

After completing a policy review you may want to consider what type of adjustments you need to put in place during this transition period. These could be things such as:

- Implement a booking system - you will have to limit the numbers in your setting depending on the size of the room.
- Staggered entry and exit times (you could use coloured wrist bands like in swimming pools) to reduce bottleneck times and busy periods.
- Track and trace, obtaining people's name and phone number on the way in or a simple app for people to scan a QR code – there are free ones available.
- A policy and process on what your users have to do if they test positive or have to isolate and how that is communicated to all your members.
- Allocated seats for adults, so parents are not moving from one seat to another throughout the duration.
- More play materials that encourage close play with parents and children from the same household as opposed to mixing.
- Invest in some individual bags to be left in the premises for next time with children's names on, so materials and resources are not shared.
- Removal of certain toys or resources that are unable to be cleaned effectively, such as soft/fabric toys.
- A more stringent cleaning protocol, which might involve shortening the sessions by 15 minutes or so for this extra activity to happen.
- More volunteers to support extra activities that are needed like cleaning.
- Have lots of hand sanitiser stations and highlight where the washing facilities are within the building.



Review, Restart, Recover: Series 3

Let's get your group playing again!

Outdoor Space

It is still very much encouraged to stay outdoors where possible. There is also a huge amount of research on promoting the benefits of children playing outdoors. Take a look into the benefits of outdoor play – you will often be allowed more people outside and the benefits are awesome! Remember it's all about being prepared for the weather, there is no such thing as bad weather if you are equipped to deal with it.

With that in mind, research any local outdoor spaces and see if it's possible to use them for your group. You could maybe team up with another group to make an unused local space into an inviting play space for families to use.

Also remember there are small funds available for you to apply to for things like gazebos and/or outdoor play equipment. Using loose parts can be cheaper and be made safe for all ages. If you would like any support on where to get funding, please refer to our [Funding Guidance Sheet](#).

Communications

If you don't own your venue or spaces that you use, get in contact with the person in charge of your venue and ask if you can be kept in the loop. There may be opportunities for you to shape how this space gets used differently as the restrictions lessen over the coming months.

Think about your families that attend your groups and get them involved, particularly any new and potential users, as that will help them to feel part of the group.

Remember to keep everyone informed on what's happening, considering all the usual methods of communications. Also many platforms have developed new features during covid such as Facebook booking systems and video conferencing, so consider using these elements. Use these platforms to build on any enthusiasm to re-start whilst waiting on word to get back into the venue, it's a great way to keep people engaged.

If you need anymore ideas or support with your advertising please refer to our [Marketing and Promoting your Services Guidance Sheet](#).



Further Information

Free Booking Systems:

<https://envoy.com/products/visitor-management-system/>

<https://www.teamreach.com/>

<https://www.codereadr.com/>

<https://www.qr-code-generator.com/>

Looses Parts and Outdoor Play Learning:

https://www.playscotland.org/resources/print/Loose-Parts-Play-Toolkit-Revised.pdf?plsctml_id=10924

<https://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/outdoor-play-and-learning>

Smart Play Network Members Support

Member you have access to telephone and email support. For more information about the topics covered in this guidance sheet, or any other queries you may have about your project, please contact us using: 0131 554 2620 or admin@smartplaynetwork.org