

Coronavirus (COVID-19): third sector family support – guidance summary

This guide is a summary of the varying Scottish Government and external guidance, which is relevant to the provision of Third Sector family support during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is not new guidance, but a helpful tool to signpost those delivering family support to the guidance that is most applicable to them. It is for each organisation to decide which guidance applies to their activity and to apply it as appropriate. Guidance will be updated regularly, and in the event of any discrepancy between relevant guidance and applicable legal requirements, the latter requirements prevail.

Organisations must operate according to the appropriate [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): local protection levels](#) assigned to each local authority area. Staff should consider carefully how many households they visit or are in contact with in one day and limit this as much as possible. The household restriction does not apply to any gatherings for the purposes of education, training or voluntary services. Physical distancing should be maintained as set out in [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): general guidance for safer workplaces](#). Travel restrictions within the different levels do not apply when travelling for essential purposes - such as provision of voluntary or charitable services. For example, travel is permitted between areas to deliver or receive organised voluntary services (including the volunteers' travel), such as parenting support or antenatal classes. In all cases direct contact should be risk assessed and planned in advance, prior to work being commenced. This guide will be kept up to date in line with the latest Government restrictions and in light of further changes to the applicable legal requirements whether at local or national level. Please ensure you are using the latest version.

Type of Family Support	Relevant guidance to support this work	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
One on one support for children with a child's plan	Direct work can take place with a child and family within their own house, or within another indoor or outdoor setting the Coronavirus (COVID-19): safe and ethical social work practice is of relevance here. Activities should be in line with the plan, overseen by the lead professional.	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
One on one support for children without a child's plan	Direct work can take place with a child and their family when no child's plan is in place (with the family's consent) within their own house, or within another indoor or outdoor setting. This public health guidance sets out the minimum requirements that should be followed. How and what support is to be provided should be discussed with the family and the individual carrying out the named person function eg. health visitor.	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
		Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted/ online where possible	Permitted/ online where possible

Working with small groups of children (indoors)	Organised group work as part of a plan or as part of general support can take place indoors according to the different level restrictions. For example, supervised activities and services for children and young people, babies and toddlers, including those where parents remain present during the activity. Depending on the nature of this work, the: Coronavirus (COVID-19): organised activities for children or the Coronavirus (COVID-19): safe and ethical social work practice may be appropriate in these cases.	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
		Max 30	Max 30	Max 20	Max 10	Not permitted in guidance
		<p>Additional considerations:</p> <p>There should be no more than 50% parents/carers (18+) at any one time with the maximum number at each level or venue capacity (whichever is lowest). Facilitators do not count towards the numbers but should be minimised where possible, eg:</p> <p>Levels 0 and 1 - Max 15 parents/carers + facilitators Level 2 – Max 10 parents/carers + facilitators Level 3 – Max 5 parents/carers + facilitators</p> <p>Parent/baby and toddler groups (under 5 years):</p> <p>There should be no more than 50% of the maximum numbers aged 18+ at any one time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 0 – Max 30 • Level 1 – Max 30 • Level 2 – Max 20 • Level 3 – Max 10 • Level 4 – not permitted in guidance 				
Working with small groups of children (outdoors)	Organised group work as part of a plan or as part of general support can take place outdoors. For example, supervised activities and services for children and young people, babies and toddlers, including those where parents remain present during the activity. Depending on the nature of this work, the: Coronavirus (COVID-19): organised activities for children or the Coronavirus (COVID-19): safe and ethical social work practice may be appropriate in these cases.	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
		Max 30	Max 30	Max 25	Max 20	Max 15

Support group work with adults or mix of children, young people and adults	Family Support, such as mental health and wellbeing support, which could involve a mix of children, young people or adults should be delivered remotely where possible, but where delivery significantly diminishes benefits compared to face to face meetings - support can be delivered in person. Those coming together for mental health and wellbeing support (including, but not limited to, carer support, group therapy, counselling, or any other support for mental illness, weight loss support, addiction support, victim support and bereavement support) are not restricted by the household regulations. This is the case whether support is professional led or peer support. Coronavirus (COVID-19): general guidance for safer workplaces should be followed and when meeting, the guidance from Health Protection Scotland applies.	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
		Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted/ online where possible	Permitted/ online where possible

Additional guidance/areas that may be of relevance

Youth Work

Youth Link Scotland's [COVID-19: Guiding Framework to support the delivery of youth work services](#) was updated on 2 November 2020 and outlines how the Scottish youth work sector will continue to strive to provide support and opportunities for children and young people as the Scottish Government moves the country through the pandemic. Any decisions made regarding delivery of youth work should be made in conjunction with the Strategic Framework and the local protection levels set for each local authority area, and Public Health Scotland advice. The guidance outlines the total number of individuals who are permitted to meet for the purposes of youth work under each protection level of the Strategic Framework which should be followed from 2 November 2020.

Community learning and development

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance for the community learning and development sector](#) to help local authorities, third sector organisations and partners working in Scotland's schools, colleges and communities to provide community learning and development (CLD) services safely.

Buildings

The use of buildings for family support activities will be subject to local arrangements. [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): organised activities for children](#) – includes details around using different buildings for children’s activities.

Play, including outdoor play

[Play Scotland's guidelines for services](#) for unregulated, informal play services supports the play sector as they consider resuming outdoor organised activities. [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): organised activities for children](#) is also of relevance to unregulated informal play settings.

Drama, music, singing

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): organised activities for children](#) also sets out restrictions around drama, music, singing. This is in line with the most recent scientific evidence from the Advisory Sub Group on Children and Education.

Parent Club

Parent Club has produced a [Parent Club Guide](#) for parents and carers on the recent COVID-19 restrictions. Parent Club has also set up a [Family Support Directory](#) to bring together all of the helpful organisations, benefits and information that can support parents and carers.

Child Contact Centres

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): child contact services guidance](#) is available for child contact centre providers who have reopened their premises and resumed face-to-face contact services and for those providers who are preparing to reopen.