



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

GUIDANCE

# Open Access Playwork settings: potential reasonable measures action card (coronavirus)

Guidance to help childcare providers protect children, staff and visitors.

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# Contents

## What is this?

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### Context

---

### Specific risks in these settings

---

### What reasonable measures should I consider taking to minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus?

---

### Communicate

---

### Links to key guidance

---

## What is this?

- This “Action Card” provides advice on measures that are likely to be reasonable to take to minimise the risk of coronavirus in Open access playwork settings
- It should be used in conjunction with current Welsh Government [regulations](#), the [\(more general\) guidance](#), and the [Childcare and Playwork Guidance](#)

## Context

- This Action Card relates to the measures those responsible for Open Access Playwork settings, must take by law, in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Staffed Open Access Playwork provision can be permanent or short-term provision, located in a variety of settings with or without premises.

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Play opportunities are provided for children in the absence of their parents and some examples include: adventure playgrounds, playschemes and peripatetic playwork (play ranger) projects which are staffed by a small team of trained playworkers visiting a different place: a park, estate play area or other public space, one or twice a week for a couple of hours.

- Those responsible for these services are required to take **reasonable measures** to minimise the risk of people being exposed to coronavirus, and spreading the virus.
- As a basis for deciding what measures should be taken, they must also carry out a **specific assessment of the risk** posed by the coronavirus.
- The Action Card highlights risks generally associated with these venues and considers what reasonable measures could be taken to mitigate those risks.
- This is not an exhaustive list and other reasonable measures not referred to below may be appropriate. More information can be found in the **Childcare and Playwork Guidance**.
- If you have questions or concerns please seek advice from your local authority's environmental health department as soon as possible. Please be aware and respectful of the fact that their role is to ensure that appropriate reasonable measures are taken so that your venue can operate as safely as possible. However, it is not their role to approve your risk assessment.

## Specific risks in these settings

As with all premises where people from different households come together, there are risks of spreading coronavirus associated with Open Access Playwork settings. While the risks for settings will depend on the activities being undertaken at the venue and the number of people present, the following risks will be typical:

- close physical interaction, including queuing in close proximity to others before entry and while at the venue, for example and while inside, for example at the reception area, lifts, toilets, cloakrooms etc.;
- increased likelihood of mixing and face to face interaction, particularly where parents remain on site;

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- potential for poor ventilation, particularly problematic where people spend prolonged periods together (indoors).

## What reasonable measures should I consider taking to minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus?

While it is unlikely to be possible to mitigate the risks completely in settings of this nature, some measures are reasonable to take, so must be taken.

You should consider whether the following measures are reasonable to take. The measures you take should be informed by your assessment of the risk of coronavirus spreading from use of your vehicles or premises and tailored to your specific circumstances. The Welsh Government has produced a [standard template](#) for coronavirus risk assessments, and there is further [information](#) available to support you provided by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

### Reduce the chance of coronavirus being present

- Encourage staff to receive both doses of a COVID-19 vaccine.
- Encourage staff to undertake twice weekly LFD testing and (where feasible).
- If a member of staff, parent, visitor or a child becomes unwell or symptomatic while attending the setting they should leave the setting immediately and follow the advice on [Test, Trace, Protect](#), including self-isolating and arranging a test.
- Staff, parents, visitors and children who are symptomatic or have tested positive for COVID-19 must not attend the setting and must strictly follow the [self-isolation guidance](#). Children (under 18) and adults who have received a full dose of the COVID-19 vaccination do not have to self-isolate when identified as close contacts of a positive case. They will still be contacted by TTP who will offer advice and guidance and should be aware of the [self-isolation guidance](#). There may be circumstances where a child or adult who would normally be exempt is directed to self-isolate by TTP. These

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circumstances will be identified by TTP on a case by case basis.

The best way of preventing spread of coronavirus in any premises is to reduce the risk of the virus being on the premises in the first place.

## Prevent crowding

- Limiting numbers or controlling movement of people so that where possible people can safely distance themselves from others. For example use one way systems to enter or walk around the premises and control the movement of people coming together in confined areas such as toilets.
- Maintain social distancing between adults both during and outside of sessions. While it is generally accepted very young children are not good at distancing, staff and other adults should still try to distance from one another.
- Controlling entry and exit points to prevent people coming together.

## Consider travel restrictions

- Settings should not knowingly accept attendance by children, families or staff in breach of the international [travel restrictions](#).

## Improve your ventilation or go outside

- Encouraging use of outdoor space where this is available – most Open Access Play Settings are based outdoors, but where there is a mix of indoor and outdoor provision, maximising the use of the outdoor element is important.
- Enhancing airflow by opening windows and propping open internal doors (but not fire doors) where possible and where safe to do so. As children will be in attendance at these premises there will be some premises where opening windows or doors may increase the risk of children injuring themselves or leaving the premises unsupervised, so this should form a part of any risk assessment.
- If there is a lack of natural ventilation, ensuring mechanical ventilation

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systems provide 100% fresh air and do not recirculate air from one space to another.

- Make sure mechanical ventilation systems are effectively maintained and have been serviced.
- Monitoring CO2 levels to identify areas where ventilation may be poor.

## Keep your premises clean

- Thorough and regular cleaning using disinfectant in high footfall areas and in high contact touchpoints such as counter tops, tables and door handles.
- Placing hand sanitisers in multiple locations, particularly at entry points and elsewhere at key touchpoints, and providing automated soap dispensers, water and paper towels in washrooms.
- Regular hand washing for children and staff; provision of hand sanitiser.
- Regular and effective cleaning regimes as outlined in [Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Childcare Settings](#)
- Prevent the sharing of food, drink, utensils, and where possible equipment and toys.

## Look after your staff

- Implementing systems to minimise contacts between staff. For example, stagger staff shifts, break times and deliveries; set a maximum number for kitchens, staff rooms, changing rooms and areas such as smoking shelters.
- Providing staff with face coverings or other PPE if necessary (see [Childcare and Playwork Guidance](#) for further advice).
- Facilitating (and not preventing) members of staff that have symptoms, test positive or who have been asked to self-isolate by Test Trace Protect. Self-isolating when a person has tested positive is required by law.

## Help Test, Trace, Protect

- Understanding the role of the NHS Wales [Test, Trace, Protect](#) system has

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in monitoring and controlling the virus.

- **Keeping records of staff, customers and visitors** to support the NHS Wales TTP Service

## Communicate

You have a legal obligation to provide information to those entering or working at your premises about how to minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus. This includes, in particular, information to all those present about their risk of exposure to coronavirus identified in the risk assessment and the measures to be taken at the premises to minimise this risk.

This could include announcements, clear signage (e.g. signs, floor tape or paint) for limits on the number people present in a particular area or vehicle, queuing systems and one way systems.

## Links to key guidance

**[General guidance on taking reasonable measures to minimise the risk of spreading coronavirus](#)**

**[Self-isolation guidance](#)**

**[Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Childcare Settings](#)**

**[Childcare and Playwork COVID-19 Guidance](#)**

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