



THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF CHURCH
BELL RINGERS

Young ringers restarting

Guidance for young ringers' groups from 12th April

This guidance is intended to enable school-age ringers (18 and under) to resume bellringing in a Church tower or private ring and has been developed with the House of Bishops' Covid Recovery Team, comparing ringers with singers and organists in church settings.

The UK government has published specific government guidance for running supervised children's activities in out-of-school settings which comes into effect from 12th April at the earliest:

[Protective measures for holiday and after-school clubs, and other out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/protective-measures-for-holiday-and-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak)

The government guidance above, which we recommend you read in full, is relatively permissive, giving organisers of groups plenty of things to consider about a particular activity and setting, putting the onus on you and the 'venue owner' (incumbent, Churchwardens, PCC) to decide what is right for your tower.

Points to note particularly are the references to maintaining face coverings especially if social distancing cannot be maintained, the importance of ventilation of the space, and hand hygiene.

A reasonable young ringers' session, based on that guidance and the Places of Worship guidance, would be as follows:

- Choose a tower that is either ground floor with through draught, or a tower with good ventilation (it should feel breezy)
- A lighter ring of bells is preferable. Exertion ringing heavier bells may result in an increase in aerosol droplets in the ringing room.
- Keep the total session to an hour, or an hour's ringing with breaks in between where you leave the finding chamber (play outside, ringing handbells in a different space, etc.)
- Limit the group to 10 children, but don't have them all in the tower at the same time
- When considering the size of the group, consider their age and ability to keep distanced, the size of the space, breakout areas, the degree of ventilation
- Ideally have smaller groups and keep those groups consistent from week to week
- Maintain distancing when not ringing, and keep the ringing of adjacent bells to short touches
- Ropes can be shared, but it is important therefore to sanitise hands between ringing
- Facemasks in ringing chamber at all times
- One DBS checked adult in the ringing chamber, one other nearby, and parents nearby
- If the adult needs to ring in order to make ringing viable they can do
- Encourage parents not to hang around together at the tower door

As always with young ringers' practices it is important to have parental consent who should be made aware of this guidance. Some churches will have a track and trace QR code or NHS QR code. Ringers should check in.

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All this is a balance. If one aspect of guidance is difficult in your tower, compensate with something else. The guidance clearly allows reasonable compromises; however it does have a specific list of items with MUST attached to them as follows:

Providers (including their staff where applicable) must always:

- 1) *Minimise contact with individuals who are required to self-isolate by ensuring they do not attend your setting.*
- 2) *Ensure face coverings are used in recommended circumstances.*
- 3) *Ensure everyone is advised to clean their hands thoroughly and more often than usual.*
- 4) *Ensure good respiratory hygiene for everyone by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.*
- 5) *Maintain enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents.*
- 6) *Consider how to minimise contact across the site and maintain social distancing wherever possible.*
- 7) *Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.*

So those items are law, whereas the rest is guidance.