



## Schools Hockey Guidelines

This summary is aimed at helping schools understand their responsibilities when delivering hockey in Schools during the Covid-19 pandemic. Currently England Hockey is at Step 4 of the Return to Play plan and it will be updated at Step 5. England Hockey guidelines are available at [www.englishockey.co.uk/covid19](http://www.englishockey.co.uk/covid19).

The document focuses on what is different for delivery of hockey in schools with the aim of supporting delivery of activity when suitable in line with Covid-19 Return to Play guidelines. Unless explicitly referenced beneath all the wider England Hockey Covid-19 guidelines still apply and so all school hockey organisers and Coaches/Teachers should have a strong working understanding of these.

### ***Specific Issues for Schools***

#### Hockey Activity:

- Hockey is defined as a non-contact sport and therefore falls under Department for Education guidance on non-contact sports.
- Community Hockey has been agreed by the Department for Culture Media and Sport and England Hockey has issued government approved guidelines for hockey available [here](#).
- England Hockey recommends that competitions should be aligned to Step 5 of the England Hockey Return to Play plans and therefore, at this time should not take place until England Hockey gives notification of progress to Step 5.
- The nature of groups for hockey activity are likely to be driven by the rules determined on a case by case basis around school 'bubbles' rather than the England Hockey Covid guidance which aligns to community gatherings.
- If the circumstances change either locally or nationally due to lockdowns England Hockey will give notice via the England Hockey website ([www.englishockey.co.uk/covid19](http://www.englishockey.co.uk/covid19)).

#### Actions for Schools Related to England Hockey Covid19 Guidelines:

- Hockey Covid Officers - Schools are not required to register a Covid Officer with England Hockey but the School Covid Officer/Lead must be clear on who is responsible for hockey related covid issues within the school.  
If the school wishes to register a Covid Officer with England Hockey to ensure direct communication then this can be done but it is optional.
- England Hockey Participation Agreements - are not required to be completed by players that only play in school hockey.  
Any players that play in club, Player Pathway or any other community hockey will be asked to complete a Participation Agreement by those bodies.

- Risk Assessments - Depending on the school approach to Covid, risk assessments may already have been carried out on hockey facilities. If a specific risk assessment is required from a hockey perspective a template and check list is available [here](#)).
- Registers – For any activity organised by the school solely involving children from the school registers are not required to be shared with England Hockey.
- Behaviour - Schools are recommended to educate players on the expected behaviours for players during hockey. England Hockey has adapted the England Hockey Code of Behaviour to allow for the implications of Covid-19. Expectations for players are set out in the Participant Guidance in the Appendix to this document as well as covered in the video [here](#).

In light of the list above we have amended the guides for players, Coaches/Teachers, facility operators specifically for use within schools only. These are included in the appendix to this document.

For any further queries please contact [schools@englandhockey.co.uk](mailto:schools@englandhockey.co.uk).

## Appendix

### Hockey in Schools – Specific Guidance

#### Specific Advice Participants in School Settings

Preparing to play:

- Self-Assessment Check - This check should be done before each hockey session and participant should declare they are symptom free and haven't been in contact with anyone with suspected or confirmed Covid symptoms within the past 2 weeks.
- Hygiene – in line with government advice wash hands before and after activity and regularly use hand sanitiser.
- For outdoor community hockey the maximum group size involved in one discrete group of close contact is 30, including Coaches/Teachers. More than one group can use a pitch as long as social distancing is maintained. Schools provision is likely to be determined by school rules on maintaining 'bubbles' that are likely to normally be limited to one year group.
- For indoor community hockey the maximum group size is determined by the venue being used but (if large enough) should not exceed 30 in one discrete group. Schools provision is likely to be determined by school rules on maintaining 'bubbles'.
- Equipment – use your own equipment – sticks, balls (mark your own with your initials), gumshield, facemasks (if required), goalkeeping equipment (if appropriate) and ensure water bottles are full on arrival.
- If you have to use shared equipment, disinfect before use and disinfect, or leave for 72 hours after use.
- If you are doing a passing drill only touch any of the balls with your stick. Allow the owner of the balls to collect and disinfect their balls/equipment.
- Insurance & First Aid – should follow school policies.

## Access:

- Travel – If at all possible you should travel on your own or in your bubble or household group.
- Avoid using public transport unless necessary to do so.
- You should try not to share a vehicle with those outside your household or social bubble. If you need to do this, try to:
  - share the transport with the same people each time
  - keep to small groups of people at any one time
  - open windows for ventilation
  - travel side by side or behind other people, rather than facing them, where seating arrangements allow
  - face away from each other
  - consider seating arrangements to maximise distance between people in the vehicle
  - clean your car between journeys using standard cleaning products - make sure you clean door handles and other areas that people may touch
  - ask the driver and passengers to wear a face covering
- Arrive as close as possible to when you need to be there.
- Check in with your organiser for Track and Trace purposes.
- Allow others to leave before you enter the pitch - if you need to wait then do so away from the pitch and clear of the gates. Follow one-way systems where they are in place.
- Ensure you leave the pitch before the end of your allotted time so that the space is clear for the next group of players.
- Arrive changed and ready to play. Shower at home and follow the facility rules on using indoor spaces such as hospitality or toilets.
- Do not congregate after playing and stay in groups of 6 socially distanced outside of play (unless you are in a school bubble).
- Where possible avoid touching gates/fences/goals unless absolutely necessary.

## Playing hockey

- Outside of playing
  - Follow the government travel advice [here](#).
  - Socially distance at 2m distancing in maximum sized groups of 6
  - Clean your hands during breaks
  - Follow the facility rules when accessing indoor spaces
- During play
  - Respect your opposition and umpires
  - Take Penalty Corners and free hits around the D promptly
  - Touch the ball with your stick/GK equipment and not your hands
  - Use your own protective equipment or disinfect before use (e.g. facemasks)

- Socially distance when play stops
- Avoid shouting excessively or spitting
- No handshakes with other players or close contact during goal celebrations
- Avoid running training exercises that involve overly repetitive close contact between players

#### After play

- Equipment and facilities used should be disinfected between sessions. We would recommend only the facility operators moves goals.
- Good hygiene practice should continue to be followed with equipment disinfected or left for 72 hours.

School rules will apply on spectators. In community hockey parents/guardians should ideally be limited to one non-participant with strict social distancing between spectators.

If you are a junior and undertaking a one to one coaching session a parent / guardian must always be present and follow social distancing guidelines.

If you show symptoms of Covid-19 you should phone NHS Track and Trace and let your school Covid-19 Officer know.

## Specific Advice for Hockey Coaches/Teachers / Teachers in School Settings

Coaches/Teachers must understand all the expectations placed upon players and play a role ensuring that protocols are followed.

Rules around school bubbles will determine group size. In community hockey the maximum group size (including Coaches/Teachers) is 30 for competitive training or match play. More than one group of 30 can use a pitch but must remain separate from the other group. Coaches/Teachers (that remain socially distanced) can move between groups.

#### Preparation

- Coaches/Teachers should take all reasonable steps to ensure that sessions are as safe as possible.
- A risk assessment should be undertaken.
- Depending on rules around school bubbles think about how you divide the pitch if more than one group is using it to ensure there is sufficient space between groups. The aim should be to ensure groups always have significant space including starting and finishing sessions. If from separate bubbles, groups should not mix but Coaches/Teachers can move across groups if they remain socially distanced.
- Rules around social distancing within bubbles in school will determine the approach to hockey sessions.
- In community hockey social distancing must be maintained outside of competitive training or matches to a distance of at least 2m. Good practice is for Coaches/Teachers to adapt sessions accordingly following England Hockey guidance and to encourage social distancing outside of competitive training / match play. Free online training sessions are being offered to support this by England Hockey.

- Coaches/Teachers should avoid running training exercises that involve overly repetitive close contact between players.
- There is an additional risk of infection in close proximity situations where people are shouting or conversing loudly. This particularly applies indoors and when face to face. If possible, players should therefore avoid shouting or raising their voices when facing each other during, before and after games. This will be included within England Hockey's code of behaviour.

#### Equipment

- It is recommended that players bring their own personal equipment (sticks and personal protective equipment) or disinfect before use (e.g. facemasks).
- Fresh balls should be used for each session – balls should be stored separately after use and disinfected or stored for at least 72 hours before being used again.
- Coaches/Teachers should collect balls or the player return them with stick/feet not hands.
- No contact between player and other coaching equipment – it is recommended that limited equipment is used if possible.

#### First Aid

- Suitable first aid provision should be provided in line with school policies.

#### Communication

- Coaches/Teachers should regularly remind participants (and parents/guardians where appropriate) of the expectations and standards required.
- Coaches/Teachers should ensure that the venue has the necessary standards in place before deciding to use the venue and on arrival and departure.

If you show symptoms of Covid-19 you should contact anyone you have been in contact with so they can self-isolate in line with government guidance.

## Advice for Facility Operators in School Settings

#### Preparation:

- Facilities should carefully follow government advice on facility opening. This should include a Covid-19 Risk Assessment (may be covered within the school risk assessment but a hockey specific one is available).
- Cleaning – suitable cleaning and hygiene arrangements should be put in place.
- External bookings should be made online or over the phone.

#### Indoor facilities:

- Clubhouses - Should only open in line with government advice relating to the opening of indoor facilities and hospitality guidelines.
- Toilets – should be opened in line with guidance but should be cleaned between sessions with appropriate cleaning fluids and water available.
- Indoor Hockey – If using for community use venues should follow government advice on the use of indoor facilities ([here](#)). For school use school rules will apply related to bubbles.

#### Outdoor facilities:

- Prepare for sessions with equipment ready and in right place aiming for there to be no contact for players/Coaches/Teachers with doors, gates, fencing, goals wherever possible.
- First aid equipment accessible and facility operator or St John's ambulance advice followed. See [here](#).
- Hand sanitisers should be made available and facility operators clean all common use areas in between sessions.

#### Running activity

- Think about how you divide the pitch if more than one group is using it to ensure there is sufficient space between groups. The aim should be to ensure groups always have significant space including starting and finishing sessions. Groups should not mix but Coaches/Teachers can move across groups.
- It is recommended to leave time between bookings (10 mins) or stagger bookings to allow for minimal opportunity for bottlenecks to occur.
- Leave gates / doors open and consider a one-way system if possible (in / out).
- Consider parking arrangements and maintaining distancing wherever possible including marking 2m distancing if you can.
- Standard England Hockey safety advice should be followed [here](#).

#### Communication

- Facility operators should provide clear signage and regular reminders for participants of Covid-19 guidelines.
- Facility operators should ensure that clear and regular communication is in place with Coaches/Teachers reminding them of standards required.

#### After

- Facility operators should disinfect equipment and places that have been used.

External bookings: Facilities must ensure that they know who the Covid-19 Officer is for any hockey club or organisation that is using the venue.

If any users of the venue or venue staff show symptoms of Covid-19 you should report them to NHS Track and Trace.